

THE
CHRISTIANS OBLIGATIONS
TO
PEACE & CHARITY.

DELIVERED

In an ADVENT *SERMON* at
Carisbrook-Castle, ANN. 1647.

AND

Now published with IX *SERMONS* more.

By H. HAMMOND, D. D.

The second Edition corrected.



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THE
CHRISTIAN'S OBLIGATIONS
TO
PURITY OF CHARACTER

By Rev. J. H. W. W.

NEW YORK

1857



For his most sacred Majesty.



He Sermon of *Peace* and
Charity which your Ma-
 jesty was pleased to call
 for about twelve Weeks
 since, by which means it
 had the favour to become one of the
 earlyest Addresses made to your Maje-
 sty after the recalling of those Votes;
 hath now taken the confidence to ap-
 pear more publick, that it may demon-
 strate and testifie the reality of your
 Majesties inclinations to *Peace*, (which
 alone could render this trifle considera-
 ble to you) and the sincere desire of
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your most private undisguised retire-
ments, to make the way back to your
Throne by none but Pacifick meanes,
even then when others thought it their
duty by the Sword to attempt it for
you.

The other few Sermons added to the
Volume have no errand but to attend
this, that it may with a little more so-
lemnity approach your Sacred pre-
sence, and enjoy that liberty, which is
denied to

Your Majesties most obedient,

Sep. 16. }
1648. }

and

most devoted Subject and Servant,

H. Hammond.

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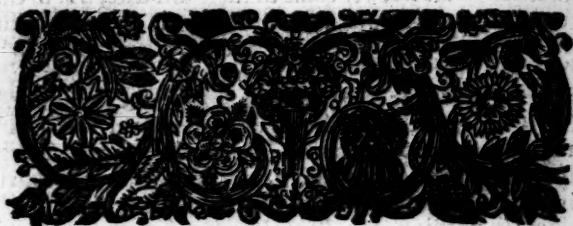
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The *Christians Obligations* to PEACE,
and CHARITY.

The I. SERMON.

ISAIAH 2. 4.

*They shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their
spears into pruning-hooks.*



He day is the third of *Advent*, designed by the Church for the celebration of the closer and nearer approach of the Majesty of heaven to this lowly sinfull earth of ours, that ευλογημένης βασιλείας, *blessed coming kingdome*, as 'tis stiled, Mark 11. 10. And the text is a piece of an *Advent* Chapter, the very contents bespeak it so, *Isaiah* prophecyng the coming, i. e. *Advent of Christs kingdome*. All the unhappynesse of it is, that this part of the prophesie about transforming of swords seems not yet to be fulfilled in our ears, that after so many Centuries, Christ is not yet so effectually and thoroughly born amongst us, as was here foretold, that those glorious effects of

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his incarnation are not yet come to their full date, *i. e.* in effect, that *Christ is come to his birth*, and with him all the well-natur'd charitable qualities, all the unity and peace and blisse in the world, and through the contrivances of the enemy-power there is not liberty or *strength to bring forth* all the precious issues of Christianity are resisted and obstructed and stifled in the womb, the temper of the pretending world being so strangely distant from the temper of Christ, the prophecies of his coming having so little of the sword in them, and the practise of Christendome so nothing else; Blessed Lord, that we might once be able to reconcile these contrary *paradoxes*, that we might one day celebrate an *Advent* indeed, and that the completion of the prophesie of this Text might be an ingredient in the solemnity, that this of ours might be one of those Nations and People judged and rebuked, *i. e.* convinced and converted by the incarnate Saviour, for then would these words of the Text be verified of us, *They shall beat their swords, &c.*

The words are the character or effect of Christs Kingdome, of the state and power of his Gospel in Mens hearts; and I shall view them, first, *absolutely*, in the severall parts or branches of this character: and then *relatively*, as they are peculiarly verified of the state of the Gospel, or as they are a character of that.

In the *Absolute* view you have, 1. *The swords and spears* on one side. 2. *The plow-shares and pruning-hooks* on the other. 3. *The passage or motion* of one of these into the other, by way of *beating*.

In the *relative* view we shall, first, have occasion to *vindicate* the truth of this prophesie against the contrary appearances. 2. To show you *how*, and by what means Christianity undertakes to work this great work, to beat the swords, &c.

I begin with the *absolute* view, and in that, with the most formidable part of the prospect, *the swords and spears*. Sharp and faulting piercing weapons found out, and forg'd by the passions and wits of men, to arme their rage, to satisfy their coverings, and ambitions, to manage all the quarrels that the carnall or diabolicall affections of men, have commenc'd or inflam'd through the world. These are the gross elements made use of by the Prophet figuratively to expresse the Instruments of our hostilities that lie more covertly in our hearts, these invisible swords

swords and spears, animosities, uncharitable, unpeaceable humors, that Christ came to allay and temper, to transform and beat into other shapes. And to put off the figure, and give you plain words in stead of it; Three sorts there are of these quarrels or hostilities, which seem all to be comprehended in these words.

1. Though more improperly, our hostilities against God, our rebellions, and resistances against his will, our contrary walkings to him, the throwing off that yoke of Morall, or Christian duties, *breaking those bands, casting off those cords, Psal. 2.* and that either, 1. In an universall dislike of his government, a direct *Nolumus hunc*, that profess'd Atheisme that begins to set up to gather Disciples and Profelytes abroad in the world, that *chear of the Scorners*, that disclaims Religion as a pusillanimous thing, a ridiculous pædantick quality, that hath in their opinion dispirited and emasculated the world: Or else, 2. By particular oppositions to his commands in the retails, sinning over all the precepts on either Mount, taking part with the Law of the Members, against all the Empires of the law of the Mind, and under a Christian profession doing as much despite unto Christ, as he that hath shut him out of his mouth, and brain also; and in relation to these hostilities it is, that we Ministers are posted from Heaven like so many Heraulds at the News of a Battery, or approach of the Enemy, to demand a Parly, before men proceed any farther in their gyantly *deuouring*, or fighting against God, and our Embassie is very submissive, *as though God did beseech you by us*, as Lot doth the Sodomites on their assault of the Angels, *We pray you Brethren, doe not so wickedly, We pray you in Christs stead that you will not proceed in your course, that you will be pacified and reconciled unto God*; And sure these are formidable slaughtering weapons, very bloody threatning Enemies, that make God think fit to send out Embassies for treaty, and not venture his Heaven to be storm'd by them.

A second sort of hostilities possibly here meant are these against our selves, the fatal'st and bloudest in the world, the piercing and wounding, and butchering our own poor souls, deforming and enfeebling them with our wasting habits of sin, exhausting the very principles of civill ingenuous Nature, lea-

ving never a vitall spark or seed of humanity behind, but violating and grieving and quenching all, a direct *felonia de se*, murdering & assassinating these divine creatures which God had prepared to people Heaven, & casting them out to the noisom' stung-hills, imploying them to the meanest offices in the world. Nay hostilities to the flesh it self; those sinnes that undertake to serve the grosser part of us, to have speciall fidelities and kindnesses to the flesh in all their warrings against the soul, are not yet so faithfull in their performances, work oft the greatest malices to that very flesh, *cast it sometimes into the fire, sometimes into the water*, despoil it of all the honour, beauty, spirits, joyes, and life it self, leave it the piteouslest, disfigured, rifled, wasted flesh imaginable, and so have their malices and treacheries against that also. But the truth is, these are but the *αερινά γυμνασία*, or *σκιαμαχία*, the prelufory lighter brandishings of these swords: The uncharitableness here especially designed are in the third place, those that (as our materiall *swords and spears*) are ordinarily imployed against our Brethren, or fellow Christians, either upon their *lives*, or their *reputations*, or their *soules*.

1. On their *lives*, when either our ambitions, or revenges, or which is the worst of all, and the bloudest assassinate (when 'tis set on it, when 'tis gotten into the Jesuite chamber of meditation) our *πικρὸς ζῆλος*, bitter envying or zeal, when that I say, like the blood of the Mulberies to the Elephant, shall inflame us to a brutality, a thirst of our Brethrens blood, turning the Christian into a *Nimrod*, a mighty hunter before the Lord, giving the Church that new notion of Militant in shedding as much of other mens blood (and triumphing in that effusion) as in the Primitive times it powred out of its own veins, when the Heathen Persecutors called for it; when Christians shall designe God sacrifices, bloody Caniball oblations, and, in that other sterne sense of the Apostles words, *λογισθε θυσίας*, *rationall humane sacrifices*, whole herds and hecatombes at once, and think to avert judgments, to work expiations, to performe supererogating services to God by that means.

2. On their *reputations*, whether in the language of the Slanderer and Reviler, *whose words are spears and arrows*, and his tongue a *sharp sword*, in the Psalmists Dialect, the preparative to that former

former practising on the life, putting men into wild beasts skins, that they may be worried, and torne to pieces in their disguises; or whether yet in the higher strain of the censorious Anathematizer, that breaths out woes and damnations, passes that bloody sentence upon all that walk not in his path toward *Canaan*; this spirituall assassiny, this deepest die of blood being most satanically designed on soules, and (because they cannot get those into their power) practising it in *Effigie*, slaughtering them here in this t' other *Calvary*, the place for the crucifying of reputations, turning men (upon any, upon no occasion) out of the communion of their charity, when they cannot out of blisse, and no doubt rejecting many, whom the Angels entertain more hospitably.

Lastly, on mens soules, whether by terrors, or by invitations, by the *sharp*, or by the *soft* weapon, working ruine and destruction on them: By the *sharp*, forcing to violate their consciences in hope to get their bodies or estates off from the torture, (as the Englishman is observ'd through impatience of any present pressure, to venture the vastest future danger that will pretend to ease or rescue him at the instant, and therefore they say the use of the rack was superseded in this Nation) and they that can be Instruments in this savage enterprise, that can thus operate under the Great *Abaddon*, in this profession of assaulting and wounding of souls, for which Christ was content to die, are sure some of the **בְּנֵי רוֹמָם** the sons of blonds, in the plurall, as the Hebrews call them; And so he also that is so skill'd at the *soft* weapon, that by the fair insinuating carriage, by the help of the winning addresse, the Sirene-mode or meen can inspire poison, whisper in destruction to the soul (as the poetick present that had secret chains in it, fettering and enslaving of him that was pleased with it, **הַמִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לְיָדָיו וְלִפְתָּחוֹ**, in the Orator, the *delight* brought shackles, the *beauty* bands along with it, but no man to loose him that was presently ensnared by them) he that can tole on the tame, well-natur'd, easie seducible into all the luxury, and the hell, the sin and the damnation imaginable, he is one of the fair-spoken sword-men that *David* speaks of, whose words are softer than butter, and yet are they very swords. You have had a view of the Artillery in the

B. 3,

Text,

Text, the interpretation of the hostile weapons, *the swords and spears*, the furniture of the Heathens Armory before Christs coming, (Good God, that in their travaile round about the world, they were not at length all transported hither, and like the Teeth of old, sowed and sprung up a whole harvest of *swords and spears*, of animosities, and uncharitablenesses in this our land!) I hasten to the more innocent tools the weapons of the Husband-mans warfare against his enemies, barrenesse and unprofitablenesse, the *plow-shares*, and the *pruning-hooks* on the other side, my second particular. The signification of these Emblemes or Hieroglyphicks you will soon discern, when you but consider them, first, in the *generall notion*, wherein both of them agree, instruments of Husbandry; and then in their severall particular proprieties. In the first, they both accord to expresse unto us the spirituall industry and skill, the office and the craft of dressing and cultivating of souls, we are Gods husbandry, his beloved plantation, entrusted ministerially under him to our own, to our Brethrens diligence.

1. Every man to take the care of his owne field, his owne soul, to help it to all the dressing and improving, to water it with his tears, when it is a dry soile, draine it with action and businesse, yea and mix it with new mould, affiance and comfort in Christ, when it is too moist, (the dissolving or weeping earth) and when 'tis too beggerly, and leane, to enrich it with all the whole Mine of *grace*, that lies treasured to that purpose in the Word of God, to ply it through each season from the seed-time of repentance, (*that sowing in tears*) to the *harvest in joy and cheerfulness*, the *bringing our sheaves with us*, these worthy meet fruits of that repentance; This earth of ours, I say, is thus to practise upon it self, or when it can doe nothing else (the driest parched unregenerate soul) yet still, with that, to cleave, and open and gasp toward Heaven, to be ready to receive and suck in those showres, those influences which that is ready to afford us, and after all the planting and watering, to acknowledge all to be Gods *workes*, his fructifying or giving of increase. And not onely thus, every man to be his own husband-man under God, but

2. Every man again to help in his Brothers field, to make his
art

art and trade of husbandry as communicative and gainfull as he can, not as the manner is, of the covetous worldling, to enclose his skills, for fear any man else should be as prosperous as he, but to diffuse our charity, and not onely, as the Ancients did, write Books of Husbandry, (our spirituall Georgicks and Geoponicks) but goe bodily and labour in the vineyards by our aid, and by our example encourage all the neighbourhood into this trade of thriving, set to that glorious work of civilizing deserts, banishing bryars and thorns, (to wch the laps'd *Adam* was condemned) quite out of the country, weed out all the ferity and barbarity out of mens minds, bring the whole region from the neglected waste to the trim fruitfull inclosure, from the wildernesse to the garden, and as far as 'tis possible towards some degree of return towards *Eden*, towards Paradise again, I mean towards the innocence and fertility of that: And if ever there was a time when the Province was large (I would I could say the harvest great) and need to pray to the God of the harvest to send a whole Army of Labourers, not with their military, but their husbandly instruments for the *ἔργον αἰσχροδουλοῦντος, ἡ ἐσθλῆς*, the grand charitable act, which *Cyrus* in *Xenophon* preferr'd before the military, to dresse a wild people, and plant some seeds (of Christianity shall I say? nay) of honest civill nature amongst Christians, to make men ingenuous Heathens, one pitch above savage or Caniball, to give a little *Europe-breed* in stead of a whole *Africk* of wilder creatures, and so in some measure to take away *Christs* reproaches, which the most unchristian lives of the generality of Christians have cast upon him, this certainly were a season for such prayers in Christendome, and all the plow-shares, and pruning-hooks, in a country would be little enough for that purpose.

But then somewhat is here noted by the particular proprieties of the plow-shares, and the pruning-hooks: The plow-shares, they are for the breaking up our fallow grounds, wounding and tearing asunder our firme fast hardned habits of sine, that quarry of earth and stone, with the fair green eaven surface over it, teaching up the root of the weeds and thorns, our corrupt customes of Atheisme, and Profanenesse, that grew so voluntarily, and so fast, nay, the very green swart, as we call it, the more innocent, blameless

blamelesse face of unregenerate morality, which though it have no great hurt in it, yet must give place to this seed of Christ, furrowing and turning it up all, that there may be the bare earth, as it were, the *solum subactum*, the broken humble contrite heart ready for this new Sower, for the infusions of grace, which will never thrive if there be any thing left to encumber or resist, to overtop or wrestle with it : and so you have the interpretation of *plow-shares* here, the rending of the impenitent heart, the preparing it for grace, the humbling the proud sinner; and fitting, and softning, and emptying him for Christ.

Then for the *pruning-hooks*, if that be the exact rendring of the Hebrew; You have then under that colour the dressing of Gods plantations, the supervenient work of pairing and cutting all excrescencies, in the regenerate Child of Heaven (parallel to the *washing* of his feet, which was cleansed already, in *Christs* answer to *St. Peter*) lopping off the suckers, the luxuriances, that will still return, as long as we have that root and *fomes* of flesh about us, and if they are suffered to grow too lavishly, will soon suck away all the vitall fructifying juice from the branches, at least exhaust very much of that heavenly store, which would be husbanded at the best advantage, every dram more pretiously employed.

But if our Margent have made the better conjecture, (as many times it doth) and the *Sithes*, which you meet with there, carry away the importance of the Originall from the *Pruning-hooks*, you have then Gods calling for his fruits in the time of harvest, *sending his Mowers into the field*, his strict requiring, and earnest expecting the plentiful issues of all his care, the growths and fructifyings of his Graces; and then put all these together (as indeed the various readings may both stand good, or the Hook or Sickle, which may probably be the yet fitter rendring of the word, wil supply the place both of text and margent, be accommodable to either, to both uses) and then you have here the entire positive businesse of all Christianity, sometimes to *break up*, sometimes to *prune*, sometimes to *prepare the fruits for Gods barne*, to *begin*, to *advance*, to *perfect that great work of fruit-bearing*, that onely designe of all Gods methods and dispensations among us, the kindly Vintage which he expects so passionately, *Isa. 5. after all his*

his husbandry: And, O what an exprobration will it be to us, the *Ecce labruscus* there; our nothing but *wild Grapes*, our sowre unsavory fruits of unrighteousnesse after all this dressing! And let that serve for the second particular of the *absolute* view, there is only the third behind, *the motion or passage from one of these to the other*, from the *Swords* to the *Plow-shares*, from the *Spears* to the *Sickles*, or *Hooks*, and that by way of beating; *they shall beat, &c.*

The same individuall metall, which was even now a sword, having suffered some change in the fire and anvill, comes out new forged in the other shape; the same affections that were even now *maliciously acted* by Satan, formed and whet at the Philistins forge, *ἑταλὰ ἀδινία weapons* of all the villany in the world, the Disquieters of the honor and peace of Christendome, the onely beautefeux abroad, our passions and appetites, let them be but transformed by the spirit of Christ, let the fire and hammer passe on them, and without being destroyed in that fire, they come out new moulded, instruments of righteousness, zeal for the reforming our own lives, emulation for purity, and for fructifying; that *Saul* that was even now an Apostle or Messenger of the Jewish Consistory to *Damascus*, and had then such a heart full of *Swords and Spears*, was so furious a Blasphemer of Christ, and Persecuter of Christians, may continue his metall still, his title and almost his name and office, and be the gallanter *Apostle of Christ*, the more abundant Labourer for ever after. Christianity doth not mean such enmity to nature, such scorn and contumely to our humane souls, as to throw all away as drosse and refuse, to mortifie any other members upon earth, but those which signifie our sins, *fornication, uncleannesse, envyings, seditions, &c.* as for the affections, or faculties themselves, have they been never so profane, and unhallowed, a breathing on them, or a consecrating them anew, a putting them to purer, & more honorable uses for the future, will serve the turn: the *Censers of Corah*, with a little change, will become excellent *Plates for Gods Sanctuary*. Let that love that even now was transported and lavisht out on the sensuall object, be baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire, come out a pure æthereall love, fastened on the beauty of holinesse, (that angelicall purity to be transcribed into thine, and thy brethrens hearts) and the more

flaming this love is, the more gracious and more acceptable it is like to be. Let but the hostility, that is now let loose upon the persons, the sins, the personall affronts, nay perhaps the graces, & vertues of other men, be retrencht and retired, and reflected on our own sins, and then let there be as much steel in the weapons, as much zeal in the revenges & indignations as ever; May but the ambitions and aspirings of the worldling (that like air, pen't up in too close a coop, works such *tempests*, and tempests, such shaking Pallie fits in the regions about us) be fastned according to St. Pauls advice, on a new object, transformed into the *divine ἀγάπη*, pursuing of charity, as of a prize in the *Olympick games*, into the *φιλοτιμία τῆς ἐκκλησίας*, taking as much pains, striving as *emulously* to contain himselfe and others in quiet, to restore a battered Kingdome to Peace again, as contentious men use, to put the world into a combustion, and then our *Swords* may become very edifying weapons, our contentions very excellent, profitable contentions, every man striving to surpasse and exceed the other, in meeknesse, patience, contented taking up the Crosse of Christ, (those more than *Olympick ἀγῶνες*, to which the incorruptible crowne is assigned) overcoming men in charity and wel-doing. Doe but you enter into the School of Christ, (the most boisterous raw incultivated you, that have least of this sacred temper about you) and that will be able to infuse it: which brings me to my second generall, the relative aspect of these words, as they are a character of the Gospel-state, of the Kingdome of Christ, and so the fitter for an *Advent Sermon*: And in that wee are, 1. to consider what truth there is in that prediction, to justifie and vindicate this prophesie against all the contrary appearances, *they shall beat, &c.* One Objection 'tis clear there is against the truth of this prophesie (and 'twere more for the credit of Christendome that there were an hundred others, so this might bee superseded) the contrary practise of the generality of Christians. Blessed Lord! where is this promise of Christs Coming, this consequent of his Birth and Kingdome among men? for since swords came once into the world, since the sweet of revenge, and the advantage of spoiling others, was once tasted, since that bloody issue once began to break out, what hath all our Christianity

stianity done to stop, or stanch it? 'Tis true, what Historians tell us, that at the time of *Christs* birth there was a notable cessation of Armes over the whole world, and the *Evangel*, Luk. 2. 1. (not taxing, but enrolling, that brought *Christs* Parents up to *Bethlehem*, and so occasioned his birth there, was an effect and immediate product of that Cessation, and 'twas a remarkable act of providence, that upon a former peace and so command for that enrolling, in the same *Augustus* time, proclaim'd at *Tarracoe* in *Spaine*, as *Seplveda* tells us, (which if it had succeeded, *Christ* in any likelyhood had not been born in *Bethlehem*) there brake out some new broils, that deferred the peace and enrolling, till this very point of time, when *Christ* was carried up in *Marier* womb to obey the prediſtion of his Birth in *Bethlehem*; But sure all this would be but a very imperfect completion of this other prophecy in my Text; this peace was soon at an end, and besides, was rather the Midwife to bring *Christ* into the world, then *Christ* to bring this peace. And yet to see how some Observers have been willing to pitch upon this one passage of story, the shutting of *Janus* Temple about the Birth of *Christ*, (the *Catholick* peace in that part of the world at that point of time) as the main thing that was pointed at in this Verse.

Their reason is cleer, because as for a long time before, so since that time, there was never any such completion of it; *Christ* born in an *Halcyon* houre, had scarce ever any one afterwards whilst he lived: and for his posterity he makes the profession: *he came not to bring peace, but a sword*, that is, he foresaw this would be the effect of his coming; Christianity would breed new quarrels in the world, some men really hating one another, upon that score of difference in Religion (and they say, no feuds are more desperately implacable, no swords more insatiably thirsty of blood, then those which *Christ* brought into the world) but most men making this the weapon, the pretence and excuse of all their bloudiness. 'Twas *Du Plessé's* account to *Languet*, why he had not a mind to write the Story of the *Civil* wars of *France*, because if he had said truth, he must render new originalls and causes of these Wars, hound that fox to a kennell which would not willingly be acknowledg'd, charge that on

an emulation, or rivalry of state, which (like the Harlot, that coming fresh from her unclean embraces, had wiped the mouth) came demurely, and solemnly, and superciliously out of the Church, the onely sanctuary to give impunity and reputation, (apology at least) to the blackest enterprises; and between the *negans* and the *aria*, the true and the pretended casualties, the effect, God knows, is generally too sad. *Mahomet* that profest to propagate his Religion by the Sword hath not brought such store of these bloody weapons, so rich a full-stockt artillery into the world, hath not kept them so constantly employ'd, so sharp set, so riotous in their thirsts of blood, as hath been observable in Christendome: I am sure that *Cæsarean* section, practising upon our own Mothers, our own bowels, fellow Christians, fellow Protestants, fellow Professors (shall I add fellow Saints? but sure, sanctity, if it were sincere, would turn these Swords into Plowshares) was never so familiar among Turks, or Savages; nay, as *Erasmus* hath sweetly observed, among the wildest beasts in Nature, (which are not beast enough to devour those of their own kind) as it is amongst Christians of this last Age almost in every part of the world. Onely the bladder of Snakes in *Epiphanius* hath been our parallel, they were there but few houres together, but one of them had devoured all the rest, and when (to trie the experiment how solitude and want of prey would discipline the devourers appetite) he was shut up alone in the bladder, his vulturous stomach lets loose upon himself, and within few minutes more, one half of him devours the other; so many divided and subdivided enmities, and when all other are wanting such bloody practisings upon our selves, that if it be true which *Psellus* saith, that the Devils feast on the vapour that is exhaled from the blood of men, sure the Christian devils, and of late the *English* are the fattest of the whole herd, the richlyest treated of any, since whole tables were furnisht for them of the blood and flesh of their worshippers. And thus far I confesse my self unable to vindicate this prophecy in this sense of it, that so it should actually prove, that Christianity would really drive swords out of the world; I should be glad to be secured by the *Millenary*, that ever there would come an age, when this prophesie would thus

thus be completed, but more glad if this Nation might have the happineſſe within ſome tolerable term to enter upon its *millennium*, that the (*Pacem Domine in diebus noſtris*, *Peace in our time, our Age, O Lord*) were not ſuch a deſperate *non-licet* forme, and that for deliverance from battail and murder, as ſcandalous a piece of *Letany*, as that other from ſudden death, hath been deem'd among us. I have ſufficiently ſhewed you in what ſenſe theſe words have no truth in them, 'tis time I proceed to ſhew you in what ſenſe they have, and that will be either,

I. By telling you that this prophetick form is but a phraſe to expreſſe the duty and obligation of Chriſtians, *they ſhall beat their ſwords into plow-ſhares*, i. e. 'tis moſt certainly their duty to doe ſo, *Charity* is the onely precept, *Peace* the onely *depoſitum*, that Chriſt took any care to leave among them, and then bee there never ſo many ſwords in Chriſtian Nations, yet 'twere more obediently and more chriſtianly done, if they were beaten into plow-ſhares; There is a thouſand times more need of amending mens lives, then of taking them away, of reforming our ſelves, then of hating or killing our Brethren, one Broken heart is a richer and more acceptable ſacrifice to God, then a whole pile of ſuch bloody offerings, ſuch *Moiſaicall* conſecrating our ſelves to God upon our Brethren; and then, as *Clemens* ſpeaks of *ſeals* or *Padag.* l. 3. c. 11. rings, that thoſe that have the impreſſions and ſculptures (as of *Idols*, ſo) of *Bow*, or *Sword*, muſt not be worn by the Diſciple of Chriſt, the paciſick Chriſtian, or as the *Polonians*, being asked concerning two Brethren that deſired to be of his Congregation, (as being of a Trade which was ſuſpected to be unlawfull, the making of Images or Faces to put upon Guns, or Ordnances) gave answer, that he knew no great danger in thoſe Images; if there were any thing unchriſtian, 'twas ſure in the *Guns*, which they were uſed to adorn: ſo certainly that Chriſt that came to caſt *Idolatry* and *Heatheniſme* out of the world, deſired alſo to caſt out that heatheniſh cuſtome of wallowing in one anothers blood, of hunting, and worrying, and devouring one another, and with the Chriſtian Faith to introduce the brotherly charity into his Church, this being the moſt ſtrict, and moſt frequently reiterated command of Chriſt, and that the importance of this prophetic, in the firſt place.

2. The truth of this prophesie will be most clear, if you observe the [*They*] in the front, and the reflexion of that on the former part of the ver. *Christ shall judge among Nations, and rebuke many people*, he shall set up his Kingdome in mens hearts, subdue and conquer them, that is the meaning of *judging* (as the Administrators of the Jewish Nation, and they that subdued their Enemies, were called *Judges* for some time), and hee shall mould men anew into an Evangelicall temper, that is the interpretation of *rebuking*; and then, *They*, i. e. these subjects of this kingdome of his, these malleable tame Evangelicall new creatures, that are effectually changed by the spirit, and power of Christs doctrine in their hearts, they that are his disciples indeed, they shall beat their swords into those more edifying shapes, shall professe more Christianly Trades, and if they doe not, be sure they are at the best, if not *Anti*, yet *Pseudo-christians*, either profest enemies, or false friends of Christ; By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another: no other character of difference to distinguish a Disciple of Christ from any man else, but the *Eoe ut se invicem diligunt, behold how they love*, how they embrace, not how they pursue, or slaughter, one another: and so there you have the difficulty cleared, how it comes to passe that there is so little charity among Christians, why? because there is so little Christianity among Christians, so much of the hypocriticall guise, of the form of Christian piety, but so little, so nothing of the power of it discernible among us; Had but Christ the least reall Influence on our hearts, it would inflame and animate us with love, had wee any of that salt within us, *Mat. 9. 50.* the onely preservation from putrefaction and rottenness of spirit, it would be as the Naturalists observe of it, *inimicus, unitive*, and bring along, what our Saviour hath joined with it, *the peace with others*; 'tis the propriety and peculiarity of the Gospel where 'tis entertained, to impress this well-natured quality, and wherever 'tis not impress'd, 'twil not be censorious to assure, in despite of all the glorious appearances to the contrary, that those men have received the Gospel, the name, the grace of Christ in vain, which will be demonstrated to you, if I proceed to my second, or last particular, To shew you by what means Christianity undertakes to work this

this great work, to beat our swords into plow-shares, and our spears, &c. And that is by three strokes, as it were, and impressions upon our souls. 1. By inculcating a peculiar strain of Doctrines. 2. By prescribing a peculiar Spirit. 3. By setting before us a peculiar Example. Every of these very proper morall instruments to this end, though (God knows) the stubborn unmaileable weapons of our warfare have too too often the honor of resisting, and vanquishing them all.

For the first, his peculiar straines of doctrines, they are of two sorts; Either they are the direct contrary to these swords and spears, or else such by way of consequence and result; Directly contrary, such is that of not avenging our selves, the *μη ἀντιτάσσιν τὸν ἑαυτοῦ*, Mat. 5. not retributing of trouble or violence to the injurious, but leaving God and his Vicegerents to work all these necessary acts of revenge, or repayment; Such is that of *loving, blessing, praying for enemies*; and, let me tell you, not onely our owne, but (which is worth the considering) our Gods enemies; for, 1. Such are all the cursers and persecuters of disciples; the true Christians enemies there spoken of, they are all Gods enemies also, as Sauls persecuting of Christians was the persecuting of Christ: There is no possible separating the hatred of the Brethren, from enmity to Christ, and therefore Polycarpus an Apostolicall person and Bishop and Martyr (one of the first Angels of Smyrna in the Revelation) commanding to pray for them that persecute us, takes in not onely the Heathen powers, and Princes, the greatest enemies of God then living, but in plain words the *ἐχθροὶ καὶ τοῦ*, the renouncers and enemies of the Crosse, i. e. certainly of Christ himself. 2. Such were the Samaritans, direct enemies of Christ, and yet such 'twill not be permitted the Disciples to curse, Luke 9. 55. 3. Because the commandment of mercifulnesse lying on us proportionably to Gods pattern, (to be mercifull as our Father in Heaven is mercifull) 'tis there said, that he is mercifull to the evil, as well as to the unthankfull, to those that have sinn'd against vertue, in generall, as well as against that particular of gratitude; and 'tis cleare, God loves his enemies as well as ours, and out of that love gave his Son for those that had sinned against the first, as well as the second Table, and consequently, so are we obliged to doe also. Lastly, because St. Paul's reason against avenging our selves is grounded

grounded on Gods sole prerogative of punishing Malefactors, *Rom. 12. 19. As it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay it, saith the Lord;* and this privilege of God sure extends to the punishing of his owne, as well as our enemies. Having named this, I need not mention any more plain Doctrines of direct contrariety to these hostile weapons; If God hath left us no kind of enemies to hate, neither our own, nor his, The first, the ordinary object of our animosity, and revenge; The second, of our very piety and zeale: and so the furious and the pious sword, the *Jehu*-zeale for the Lord of hosts, as well as that other for our selves, the slaughtering of Christs or the Christians enemies, be quite excluded out of our commissions, then sure there is no excuse for keeping so much profitable metall in that unprofitable, cutting, piercing shape; there is far more use of those materials in another form, in that of the *plow-share*, and *pruning-hooke*, the work of repentance being still as necessary, as that other of uncharitableness is unchristian. But then this is not all that Christ hath done by way of pacifick doctrines, some other doctrines he hath as effectually contrary to *swords and spears*, though not so directly and visibly, some mines more secretly to supplant this bloody temper; Such are his teaching his Disciples, *humility*, and *meeknesse*, and *patience*, and *contentednesse* with our own, four graces, which if once received into our hearts, are the *breaking the bow*, the *knapping the spear asunder*, the rending up all unpeaceableness by the roots; What are the roots of strife and contentions among men? or in *St. James* his stile, *from whence come wars, and fightings among you?* *πολεμοι και μαχαιραι*, of the greater and lesser and lesser size, the piracies of the first or second magnitude, are they not from the lusts that war and rage in your members? what bee those lusts? why, the spawn of those two great sensual principles, *anger* and *desire*, sometimes *pride*, sometimes *stomack*, sometimes *impatience of injuries*, and sometimes and most especially *covetousnesse*, the desiring to have somewhat which God had not made my lot, and nothing but huddling, and blending, and confusion of proprieties, throwing the lots into the helmet again, can give me hope of attaining it; All the irregular *swords and spears* in the world are in the hands of these lusts, both to forge

forge and manage, and the graces that Christ prescribes, are sent to drive these all out of the field: The *humility* that Christ prescribes is directly contrary to that *pride*: the *meeknesse* or *obedience* to superiours, so inculcated in the N. T. is the mortifying that *stomack*; the *patience*, and *taking up the Crosse*, and *denying my self* that hellish piece of sensuality, that of revenge, *αἰμαγευτικόν*, is sent out to duell with that *impatience*; and *contentednesse* with what ever lot, with that of *ravening* and *coveting*. O let but the *beatitudes* in the 5 of Mat. plant these blessed feeds in us, and our *swords* will presently be out of fashion, and within a while assaulted and eaten through with the tameſt creatures, the *rust* that themselves beget; your carnall affections will lie uselesse by you, or else be undiscernibly transformed into calmer and more profitable shapes: and that is the first part of Christs method in working this change, by a *new straine of precepts or doctrines*.

His second way is by a *new kind of spirit*, whether by that we mean the *spirit of Christ*, or the *spirit of the Gospel*.

First, the *spirit of Christ*, taken almost in the Naturalists acception of the word [*Spirit*] for a kind of vitall or animall spirit. For this flowing from Christ our head, and passing freely through all the members, unites not onely to him, but one to the other also in a vitall *fellow-membership*, to which you know nothing is more contrary or destructive then the *sword*, *division* and or *separation*; and this is the argument in St. Paul for the strictest charity, not so much as to tell a *falsety* one to another, (which is sure lesse then drawing of *swords*, calling down fire from Heaven one upon another) because, *sith he, you are members one of another*; All members are united in one *spirit*. And then though some members are sometimes corrupt and diseased, and therefore offend and grieve the other members; Nay, 2. though one member sometimes work reall injury to the other, the petulancy of the hand or tongue bring mischief to the whole body: And 3. though the members generally differ in opinion one from the other, the smell liking that, which the taste utterly dislikes; yet is neither one nor all of these ground sufficient for any member to bear malice, revenge, any thing but *love* and *tendernesse* of care and bowels

bowels towards the other, because of the uniting spirit that passes through them, and gives them joy and sorrow, in sympathy one with another, but never animosities, or indignations, undeterminings or betrayings one of the other.

But then secondly, that which I chiefly mean by the new kind of spirit, is, the spirit of the Gospel. In the 9 of Luke, there is a reference to this (as to a consideration that all disciples of Christ are much concerned in, and from ignorance whereof all our bloudy, and fiery, and thundring designs against our owne, or the enemies of Christ doe proceed) *an oldere elu mruar@ vnuis*, you know not, or consider not, what kind of spirit you are of: The Gospel-spirit, it seems, was peculiarly qualified, a spirit of a speciall temper, nothing favourable to the proposalls of the Boanerger: and if you would know the kind of it, you shall have it, first, Positively, then Negatively; Positively the Gospel-spirit is (a jewel, will you call it, or) an asterisme made up of all those celestiall gems even now touch'd on, poverty of spirit, mourning, meeknesse, purity of heart, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, not after the Canibal-feast of fellow Christians blood, again of mercifullnesse, peace-making, being persecuted and reviled (and *na mruar@ vnuis*, not a piece of Rabsheks railing Rhetorick to be had in hell, which is not powred out on them, and endured cheerfully by them in obedience to Christ) put all these together, and mix with them such a proportion of self-deniall, and cheerfull following of Christ, whithersoever he leads, and the quintessence, the Elixir that by the help of the Limbeck is fetcht out of all these in union, or refraction, is, in the Chymists stile, the spirit of the Gospel, the spirit of Christianity. If you will yet more perfectly understand it, you must then look on it Negatively, as 'tis in that place by Christ set opposite to the spirit of Elias; Elias his spirit you may discern by the five considerations or respects that his person is capable of.

1. Elias was under the Law.
2. Elias was a Prophet.
3. Elias was a Zealot, as the Author of the Book of Mac. calls him and Phinees, and so he was peculiarly in that passage to which the Disciples referre.

4. Elias.

35d. 2. *Elias calls for judgments from Heaven.*

36d. 3. *That judgment was particularly fire.*

And proportionably to these five *Elias* his spirit was

1. A *Legall spirit*. 2. A *Prophetick spirit*. 3. A *Zelotick spirit*.
4. A *Cursing spirit*. 5. A *Fiery spirit*. And by the opposition to
each and all of these five, you will be able to make up the new
qualified spirit, the *spirit of the Gospel*.

The *Legall spirit*, is that which was observable in the time of
the *Law*, especially in order to the planting of the *Israelites* in
Canaan, and rooting out of the *Inhabitants*, and that was a rough,
bloody, hating, eradicating spirit; and that *legall* is certainly out-
dated, and abolish'd now, and in its place the *spirit of the*
Gospel, a smooth, loving, planting spirit, quite contrary to
that.

2. The *Prophetick spirit* was that which received immediate di-
rections from Heaven, I mean not from the supernaturall influ-
ences and motions of grace preventing, or exciting, sanctify-
ing or assisting in the heart of the regenerate man, but (as the
spirit of sanctification, and the *spirit of prophesie* are very distant
things, so) I say, from the extraordinary revelations of his
will, by *Urim* and *Thummim*, by *Vision*, by *Dream*, by *coming* of
the Spirit, or of the Word of the Lord upon them, or to them,
Deo ipso motore, acted and carried by God. And the *Gospel-spirit* is
that, which after the out-dating of prophesies, pretends to no
such speciall revelations, to no other direction, or incitation,
or impulsion of the spirit, then that which lies visible in the
New Testament (*verbum vehiculum spiritus*, and *divina ministerio*;
the word is it that brings and administers the spirit unto us) the
spirit that incites us to perform those duties that the Word
hath prescribed us, (and if to any thing else, contrary to
that, hath then need of the Exorcist to bind or cast out that
spirit) the spirit which when it comes to be tried whether it
bee of God, or no, pretends not like *Mahomet* to bee a talk-
ing with God, whilst hee lies foaming in an Epileptick fit,
but is content to bee judged and discerned by the old plain
doctrines of the Gospel, a regulated, authorized, ordinary, sober
spirit.

3. The *Zelotick spirit* was a thing peculiar among the Jewes, introduced and settled by the example of *Phinees* and *Elias* by way of president, and standing law to that Nation, whereby 'twas lawfull (when a man was taken in some notorious facts, specified by their Law, idolatry, &c.) to run him the-gow, to kill him in the place, without expecting any legall processe against him. This was expressly commanded by *Moses*, Numb. 25. 5. *Slay yee every one the men that are joined to Baal-Peor*, and accordingly practised by *Phinees* upon incitation from God; and when 'twas done so by a Jew, in the cases provided by the Jewish Law, and by divine impulsion, and the person assured that it was so, there was then no harm in it; but when that incitation from God was but pretended onely, not true, when in any case but that prescribed by the Law, then 'twas perfect butchery and villany even among those Jewes: and unlesse in those few presidents of *Phinees* and *Elias*, and the *Maccabees*, i. e. *Zelots* (for so the word *Maccabee* signifies in the Syriack) 'twil bee hard to find either in Scripture, or *Iosephus* (where there were whole multitudes of such men) any one example of this practise justifiable even in a Jew; and in opposition to, and not compliance with that is the Gospel-spirit quite contrary to the hights of the Jewish practise, never sheds blood upon any but regular commissions, an obedient, orderly, temperate, coole spirit.

4. The *curfing spirit*, that may bee of two sorts, either in passing judgements on mens future spirituall estates, a censorious damning spirit, such as hath been usuall in all kind of Hereticks almost that ever came into the Church; (nor spirituales, wee the spirituall, and, in the King of China's stile, *filiu cali*, sons of heaven, and all others *animales* or *psychici*, animall carnall men) or 2. in wishing, praying, calling for curses either on Gods, or our enemies; and you may know the Gospel-spirit by the opposition to these, a hoping, charitable, mercifull, deprecating, blessing spirit.

Lastly, the *fiery spirit*, is a vehement, violent, unratiocinable, unreconcilable spirit, sets all, where ever it comes, into a flame

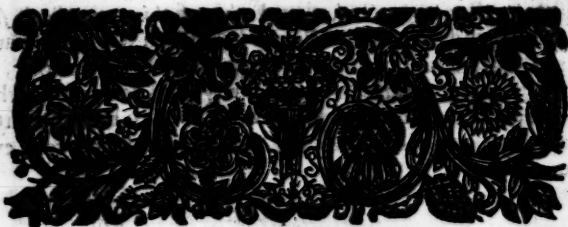
flame and combustion, and will never have peace with any thing which it can possibly consume; nay farther, it infects warmths, and distempers, and turbulencies into all that come within any reach of it, communicates and diffuses its violencies to all others; and the Gospel-spirit is direct antipodes to that, an *allaying, quenching, quieting, cooling spirit*. And so you see this new spirit, *the spirit of the Gospel*, of what a temper it is in all these respects, a spirit more fit then lightning to melt the swords in our scabards, to new forge these hostile weapons into those that are more civill and profitable; and that was the second course by which Christianity was to work this metamorphosis, to *beat these swords, &c.*

3. And lastly, our Saviour hath contributed toward this great worke by the exemplarinesse of his owne practise in this kind; Not onely in the first place in refusing to have the fire from Heaven, that the *Boanerges* would have help'd him to, against the *Samaritans*, (profest enemies of Christ, and of all that had any kind lookes toward *Jerusalem*; and besides, notorious hereticks, and schismaticks, and yet pretenders to the onely purity and antiquity, against all sense and reason, and so most arrogant hypocrites also; and yet all this not enough to inflame *Christ's spirit* into that of *Elias* his, or to change his temper into any thing of zeale, or anger against these). Not onely (in the second place) in reprehending and trashing of *St. Peter's* zeale, when it drew the sword in his Masters defence against the *high Priests servants*, and indeed against the very Crucifiers of Christ: Nor onely in the third place, in refusing the aide even of Angels from Heaven, (when they were ready upon his summons) against the Heathens that attach'd him. But fourthly, and above all, by that answer of his to *Pilate*, *John 18. 36.* *If my Kingdome were of this world, then should my servants fight, &c.* (which was certainly part of that good confession before *Pilate* mentioned with such honour, *1 Tim. 6. 13.*) inferring that because his Kingdome was not of this world, because hee was not a worldly or an earthly King, therefore *his servants were not to*

fight for him against a legall power of Heathens, though 'twere but to save him from crucifying. 'Tis clear 'twas one of his Accusers main hopes to find him in *Judas Galilites* doctrine, that 'twas unlawfull for Gods people (and so for him that undertook to be Gods Son) to be subject to Idolaters, making a shew of piety, (as the *Gnosticks* after did) toward their *Idolaters*, thereby freeing themselves from subjection in this world; but our Saviour every where disclaims that doctrine; both *Mat. 22. 21.* vindicating *Cesars* prerogative by his Coyne; and in that good confession to *Pilate*; From which 'tis demonstrable, that what was not to be done in defence of Christ when hee was in that danger and under that persecution, is no more to be attempted in that case for Religion, for Christianity it selfe. I shall shut up this by leaving in your hands that most glorious lively Image of his whole soul, and life, delivered to us in one medall, that [*Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls.*] To which if you adde the sealing, and the practising of this, in the giving up his soule, laying down his life, an offering of charity even for enemies, and yet farther for those enemies soules, this one amulet hung about your necks, one would think were sufficient to charme all the weapons of our warfare, that are so unmercifully carnall, to exorcize and conjure all the swords and spears out of the world, to work new transfigurations and metamorphoses among us, to return the bears and vultures into their old humane shapes again, and proclaim an universall truce to all the military affections we carry about us, to our wraths, our covetings, our aspirings, a Sabbath, a Jubile of rest and peace, like that which *Iamblichus* talkes of in the spheres, a *καθολικὴ ἀρμονία*, a catholick constant harmony and accord, a present pacification of all our intestine broyles, and so a quiet, and rest unto our soules; and till this be done, till this *Advent* prophesie be fulfilled in your ears, you must know there is little of Christianity among us, little of Evangelicall graces, or Evangelicall spirit, nothing but legall at the best. That in Gods good time there may be more, not in the brain or tongue, to elevate the one, or adorne the other, but in the heart, the depths and sincerity of the heart, more of the work and power, the spirit and vitall energy of the Gospell, God

God, of his infinite mercy grant us all, even for the sake and through the operation of his Son Jesus Christ, that *wonderfull Counsellour*, that *mighy God*, that *Father of this evangelicall state*, that *Prince*, and that *God of Peace*. To whom with the Father and the holy Ghost be ascribed as is most due, the honour, the the glory, power, praise, might, majesty, and dominion, which through all ages of the world hath been given to him, that sitteth on the throne, to the holy Spirk, and to the Lamb for evermore. Amen.

THE



Christs Easie Yoke.

The II. SERMON.

MATTH. II. 30.

My yoke is easie, and my burthen is light.



That the Christians heaven should be acknowledged his onely blisfull state, and yet they which pant for blisse, never think fit to enquire after it: That Christ the way to that heaven should be truly stiled by one Prophet, the *desire of all Nations*; and yet they that look on him, be affirm'd by another Prophet, *to see nothing in him that they should desire him*: That a rationall creature should be made up of such contradictions, as to desire life most importunately, and yet as passionately to make love to death, to professe such kindnesse to immateriall joyes, and yet immerse and douz himself in carnall, to groan and languish for salvation, i. e. an eternall state of purity, and yet to disclaime and flie it, whensoever any impure delight is to be parted with; might

might have leave to exercise and pose a considering man, were there not one clear account to be given of this prodigy, one reason for this, from whence many evil reports that are brought up of the way to this, and the prejudices, fatall prejudices infused into us, the vehement dislikes and quarrels to all Christian practise, that onely passage to our onely blisse. We have heard of an Angell with a flaming Sword at the gate of Paradise, which our poetick feare and fancies have transformed into a Serpent at the dore of the *Hesperides* garden (that Angel fallen, and turned into a Devill) we have heard of the Caniball *Anakims* in the confines of the promised Land, that devoure all that travaile toward that Region: And our cowardly sluggish aguish phanicks have transplanted all these into Christendome, made them but emblems of Christs *duri sermones*, the hard tasks, unmercifull burthens that he laies on his Disciples, yea and conjured up a many spirits and Fairies more, sad direfull apparitions, and sent them out all a commanded Party to repell or to trash us, to intercept or encumber our passage toward *Canaan*, to pillage and despoile the soule of all Christian practise, of all that's duty in Discipleship.

Three of these prejudices our Saviour seems to have foreseen and prevented in the words of this Text.

1. That there is no need of *doing* any thing in Discipleship, Christ came to free from *yokes*, to release from *burthens*, the Gospel's made all of promises, Obedience to precepts is a meer unnecessary: And for the preventing of that prejudice, you have here as a yoke, and a burthen, so both of Christs owning, *Yoke mu & qoerlov mu*, my yoke and my burthen.

A 2^d prejudice of them that being forc'd to confesse the necessity of Christian obedience, doe yet resolve it impossible to be perform'd, discerning the *burthens* in my Text, must have them unsupportable *burthens*, no hope, no possibility for us to move under them, and then *studium cum spe senescit*, their industry is as faint as their hope, desperation stands them in as much stead, as Libertinisme did t'other, they are beholden to the weight of their burthens for a *Superfedeas* for taking them up; and for the preventing of that prejudice, you have here this character of Christs burthen, not onely supportable, but light; my burthen is a light burthen.

A 3^d prejudice there is yet behind, of those that having yeelded the both necessity and possibility of Christian obedience, are yet possess'd of the displeasingnesse and bitternesse of it, like those in the Prophet, cry out [*The burthen of the Lord, the burthen of the Lord,*] the yoke a joylesse melancholy yoke, the burthen a gawling pinching burthen, and to them hath our Saviour design'd the *Χειρὸν*, here, as the most significative epithet to expresse the nature of the Christian yoke: we have rendred it but imperfectly, *my yoke is easie*, it signifies more richly, *my yoke is a benigne yoke*, all pleasure and profit made up in the word; *Κύριος Χειρὸν*, the Lord is gracious, 1 Pet. 2. 3. τὸ Χειρὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, Rom. 4. signifies; the bounty; wee render it, the goodnesse of God, that which immediately before is, the riches of his bounty, and proportionably the *Συνεὶς Χειρὸς*, a gracious bountifull yoke, a mine, a treasure of bounty, a good, a joyous, and a gainfull yoke; and he that is thus answered in all his objections, confuted in all his fears, and prejudices, and excuses for Libertinisme, if he doe not acknowledge the reasonablenesse of Christs advice, [*take my yoke upon you,*] take it for its own sake, though it were not laid upon you by Christ, my necessary, my light, my gracious yoke; hee that will not accept of some office in the house of so good a Master, I know not what kind of adrefs to make to him, I must leave him to Pythagoras's *sponde's*, that could cure a Mad man, *ἡ νουθεσία*, rectifie the errors of his appetite first, and then his mind, first of his spleen, and then his brain, before any portion of this bread of life will be diet for him.

I have drawn you the lines which lie folded up in this Text, the filling each up with colours in the shortest manner I could devise, would prove a work of more time, then is now my portion. The expedient I have resolv'd on is, to leap over the two former, and onely fasten on my last particular, as that which includes, and supposes the two former, as that which will bring its reward with it, invite and feed your patience, and in all probability obtain your beleefe, because there is never an interest, never a passion about you that it contradicts.

Your patience being thus armed with a sight of the gesses, but one stage, and that the smoothest you ever pass'd; I shall presume.

presume you ready to set out with mee; and it is to consider that anticipation of the third prejudice in the Epithet affixt to Christs yoke, in the fulnesse of its significancy, *τοῦτο τὸ ἄνωγον, my yoke is a benigne, a gracious, a pleasant, a good, and a gainfull yoke.*

Yea, and that in this life at the taking the yoke upon you, a present goodnesse in it here, though there were never a treasure of rewards, never a heaven after it, at least as the present paradise of a true Disciple is considered apart, abstracted from that future expectation, *my yoke is a good yoke*, is for the present, the [is, Is] hath an influence on the *ἄνωγον*, as well as on the *ἰσχυρον*, on the gainfulness of the yoke, as well as the supportableness of the burthen. And so you see the full of my scope, the utmost of my designe, the present advantages of a Christian course, the instant goodnesse of Christs service beyond all other callings and preferments in the world, a yoke, but that a good one, a yoke that shall never bee repented of by him that bears it, whatever it bee apprehended to cost him at the taking up.

And 1. you may please to observe that a yoke hath nothing of hardship in it, 'tis smooth'd and fitted to the neck, rather to ease, than presse; rather to defend, than gale; not as a weight or burthen, but onely an instrument of advantage, to make the burthen that is to be undergone more easie and supportable; and therefore our Saviour counts of it, as that which a rational man would be content to take up of his owne accord, if hee knew the benefit of it, [*Take my yoke upon you,*] and be richly rewarded in the taking, *and you shall find rest unto your soule.* The entrance on Discipleship making the New Vow converting to God, is this taking Christs yoke upon us, (as the performing the Vow, the practise of the severall duties, is the moving under the burthens.) And, to prevent mistakes, to forestall all possible objections, I shall acknowledge to you that there is some difficulty in that taking, though not in that yoke, *μηδὲν ἐστὶν ἐν αὐτῷ*, some difficulty in the first setting out, in the breaking off from the former course whatsoever it were, Somewhat of phansie, somewhat of interest against it.

Of *phantie*, to take leave of an old familiar, to carry out the whole body of sin to its funerall, (that *pompa mortis*, so much more grievous then death it self) to give up the earth to earth, corruption to corruption, with all the pompous solemnities attendant on an hearse; This, I say, hath somewhat of sadnesse in it, especially to the inferiour brutish part of the man, like the *Persian* Commander in *Herodotus*, his fall is lamented by the *Horses*, and *Oxen* and *Bacians*, all the bestiall, rude herd of man joining in the *ἔκφρασις*.

So besides, there is somewhat of *interests*, some uneasinesse again in the motion necessary to so vast a change, some injury to the old possessors, *aliquid iniqui*, somewhat of pressure in the change it self; Some paine in spiritualizing of flesh, racking it, fetching it from the *lees*, rarifying and attenuating the *πνεῦμα πυκνὸν καὶ σκληρὸν εἰς πνεῦμα ὁμιον*, the spirit incoarsate by vicious diet, as *Philoponus* calls the habituate sinner, of returning the grosse habite of sin to a sparsenesse and slenderesse of stature, an exinanition of that carnall appetite, which hath brought in all the grosser joyes, which hitherto wee have fed on; and the truth is, this even with *St. Paul* himselfe goes for a mysterious piece, *1 Cor. 15. Behold I shew you a mystery, we shall all be changed*; the change of the naturall to a spirituall body, is a greater work than the rising of the dead: no wonder then that the naturall man generally is not so well satisfied with this, *Saul* is faine to be struck down in the place, a kind of *ἁπνομένη*, or swooning fit, an expiration of the animall man, necessary to so great a change, as the *LXXII.* have cast *Adam* not into a sleep (as the *Hebr. Text*) but into an *ἔκστασις*, a being hurried out of himselfe to make him capable of an helper; thus when *Christ* was first born in *Bethlehem*, *Herod* the King was troubled and all *Jerusalem* with him, such great stupendious felicities are not brought forth without some pangs at birth, some unpleasant throws at the delivery; the very earthy *Canaan* is not cometo, but by passing through a proceriall wilderness. Thus much by way of concession of the some difficulty to the carnall man in taking up of *Christs yoke*, the minute of the new creation; but that being supposed,

Let

Let me now tell you, this is all that is of hardship in the Christians life, all the unacceptable even to flesh and blood, the instant of putting on the yoke, of entering into the traces, of harnessing for the future race, *οἱ τῶν θανάτων*, as the Greek in the *Acts* reads it, the child-birth pangs of dying to sin, of mortifying *νίκῃ ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ*, the affections that are so fast'ned on the earth, that like a *Plantaginis* torne from its soyle, they bleat and roar again, the concussion or flesh-quake that follows the sudden stop in the vehement course, the *Vertigo* that the forcible turn in the rapide motion begets, the smart that the passing thorow the purgative fire costs us; and the fear of this one sharp minute is that that betraies us to all the drudgery, and torments in the world, that which makes us so shie of piety, so fraid of all spirituall conceptions: As, you know, that one terrour of dying, parting of such ancient mates, makes some good men not over-willing to be with Christ, though they acknowledge it never so much a more valuable state; Whereas could we but arme our selves for this one act of spirituall daring, the paine of ascending the Mount *Tabor*, and being transfigured with Christ, we should soon resolve of the *bonum est esse hic*, it is good for us to be here, and set presently to build us Tabernacles, never to return to our old shapes or tents again; Could wee but resolve to set out on this voyage, encounter this one Gyant, son of *Anak*, the breaking-off from our old customes, there were then nothing but *Canaan* behind, that *οἱ δὲ θεοὶ ἀρέουσιν*, as once *Homer* called *Greece*, the pap of the earth, that fountain of milk and hive of honey, (all the bees and hornets being driven out of it) a succession of uninterrupted felicities streiming through it. Could we but repell the phantie, or support the pangs of one short travaile, in contemplation of the joy which the man-child will within a few minutes bring into the world with him, *ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* *Hef. 1. 1.* I am confident Christ would be once more not only *οὐκ ἐλάττω ἐστίν*, in *Jacob's* prophesie, not onely the expectation, but withall the joy, the sensuality of the very Gentiles, that which flesh and blood, man in every of his most inferiour capacities, the rationall, the morall, yea and the carnall man would thirst with more joy, tast with more ravishment, devoure with lesse satiety than ought, which his present confessions of

luxury did ever yeeld him, and thence brake out into the *Virgin-mother's Magnificat*, a transportation of joy for the approach of the birth of so much blessednesse; or into *Old Simeon's Nunc dimittis*, desire no more joy in this life, than that which infallibly attends the taking a Saviour into his arms, those intimate embraces of Christ in the regenerate heart.

To make this more visible and acknowledged in the retails, than 'tis in the grosse, in the coyne, than 'tis in the bul- lion, I shall require your patience but to these two heads of probation: One, by viewing severally some of the chiefe Duties of Christianity. The other, by enumeration of the speciall Good things which have ever been prized by man- kind.

The first, I say, by surveying the duties of a Christian, the tasks that are prescribed him by Christ, the particulars of his yoke and burthen. Consider them a while, and if they be not the object of all other mens envy, if his toyls be not demonstra- bly the vastest pleasures, his exercises the most joyous divertis- ments, and highest rank of entertainments that any mortall hath arrived to I shall be content with *Cassandra's* fate, never to be cre- dited in my affirmations.

For instance, Wel-doing in generall; in the first place, the conscience of any degree of that, of having discharged any part of duty, that [*exige bene serve*] from the God within thee, what a ravishment is it to any the meanest undertaker, what an *odio*

* Μίτε ἐρπὺν
ἐλλόπῃ ἡγῶμαι
ἢ τὸ τὸ δῶτα
πρὸς αὐτοὺς.
And Diogenes
in Plutarch de
tranquill.
Ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς
πᾶσαν ἡμέραν
ἐορτὴν ἡγεῖται.
* Herod l. 8.

of all high taits compounded together? Their very enemies could say it of the Athenians in *Thucyd*: * That there was nothing that they could connfeast or banquet, but the having done what they ought. And the * Persians when they beheld the solemnity of the Græcian Olympick games, such courage and patience of the combatants, and no reward expected but an *Olive crown*; expo- stulate with *Mardonius*, Why dost thou bring us to fight against those who fight not for money, but vertue? A conscience of having done well, serv'd in with a few leaves about it, was it seems the daintiest dish, and most animating, emboldning re- ward in nature. And if a Christian cannot outvie those Hea- then, if it be not in our brots, as it is in the Translations of our

our Bibles [*a merry heart, all one with a good conscience*] and the attribute of that a continual feast to thee as it was to Solomon, beleeve it, thy taste is mortified, thou art no competent judge of dainties: And that is one part; or indeed the summe of all *Christ's yoke*, *καὶ τὸ συνέσθαι ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ*, in all things a good conscience.

In the 2^d place, not to lead you out of the most vulgar rode, that our discourse may be the more demonstrative, the Trinity of Theologicall vertues', *Faith, Hope*, and *Charity*; what are they but so many elevations of the Soule above all that's meane and painfull; so many steps of entrance into obedience and blisse, into discipleship and paradise together.

For *Faith*, 'tis St. *Peter's* expression, *πιστεύοντες ἀγαλλιάσθε*, *believing you doe exult for joy*; *Faith* naturally hath that acquiescence and joy in it, and that a *χαρὸς αἰνυμένη* & *δοξάζουσα*, an inexpressible and glorified joy, even in this life. Take it but in the meaner of its offices, as it is a trusting God with our temporall weale, a full submission not onely to the will, but wisdom of God, a resolution that God can chuse for us better than we for our selves, that whatever he sends, his hottest or bitterest potion, is fit for our turnes, and so absolutely better and even to us (when we see 'tis his will) more eligible, more desireable than any thing wee could have prayed for. That cheerfull valiant resignation of all into God's hands, with an old *Eli's Dominus est*, *It is the Lord*, let him doe what seemeth him good, what a blessed pill of rest is this unto the soule? what a Sabbath from all that servile worke, those horrid perjuries, those base submissions, that the covetous Manimonist, or cowardly trembler trudges under? though the earth shake, or the hills be carried into the midst of the Sea, he is the Cube indeed that *Socrates* pretended to bee, hee hath a basis that will not faile, his feet stand fast, hee beleeveeth in the Lord. Hee hath gotten a superiority of mind, that all this region of meteors cannot disquiet; hee hath rifled all the Sects of the old Philosophers, robb'd each of them of his master-piece, the Sceptick of his *ἀσάφεια* & *ἀνιστορία*, indifference and untroublednesse, the Stoick of his *μὴ τιμὴν τρεφόμενος*, he hath none of the tragical complaints

1 Pet. 1. 8.

plaints how tragically soever his sufferings bee, and *Epiurism* of his *παλιν*, tranquillity or calme of mind, to the acquiring of which all his philosophy was designed, a thing so hugely pleasurable, that he hath been taken for a carnall voluptuous swine ever since, upon no other merit, but for seeking out those great compositors of the soule, so much beyond all other sensuality: Those boasts, I say, and prides, those dreams and wishes of those Philosophers, are now the reality and acquisition of a Christian, an Epicurisme which *faith*, and onely *faith*, undertakes to furnish us with. A thing so deeply considerable, that I cannot but resolve all the differences of mens estates and fortunes, as well as souls; their secular felicity, and infelicity, as well as piety and impiety, to proceed from this one fountaine opened by Christ to the house of David: No Prince more happy than the Pezant in the present advantages of this life, but as hee hath more faith than hee, the spring of our daily misery as well as our sinnes is the [*ο δεισμων, O ye of little faith.*]

And so certainly for Hope, that second Christian gemme, that royall High Priest of ours that enters within the vail, takes possession before hand of all that's rich or secret, brings down all the treasures of another world to be our daily portion in this, hope of Eternity, hope of Heaven, you will not wonder if I assure you 'tis a far pleasanter companion, than the possession of all worldly preferments. You would bee amazed to hear a *Papist* describe his *Purgatory flames* so scorching, and yet goe cheerfully out of this world into the midst of those flames, but he will satisfie your wonder when he tells you, that the expectation of the heavenly joys that those flames do confirm and ascertain to him, though after never so many hundred years,

* Μέρηδ' αὐ-
τίδ' ἐλάττω.

* Τὸ πολὺν ἐν
αὐτῷ αὐτῷ.

* the precious hope that dwells there, and the assurance of a title * in heaven, a portion in that glorious *ἁγίασμα*, or enrolment, is richly sufficient to allay those flames, to make those scorchings supportable: And then judge what a confluence of pleasures is this one grace supposed to bee, which is resolved sufficient to sweeten and recommend a *Tophet*, to make torments desirable, like the kind gales and benigne vapours under the line that *Manardus* tells of, which make the torrid'st clime habitable, and the presence of that fourth in

Nebuchad-

Ep. med.

Nebuchadnezzars furnace, which makes the three children sing in the midst of flames.

As for *Charity*, that's certainly the *μικτόν νόμον*, superiour to either *Faith* or *Hope*, for joy and pleasure, as well as use and excellency. Can there be any thing so ravishing as love, love of so for ever-satisfying a beauty, that heroically improvement and elevation of soule, the want of which is as great a punishment as 'tis a sin, as much of hell in the extinction of the flame, as in the raging of it; in the chill num'd, as in the raving tormented spirit, as farall a lethargy from the one, as fever from the other. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maramatha, saith St. Paul. Blessed Apostle, I cannot imagine thy Gospel-spirit could permit thee to deliver those words as a wish, or prayer for curses on any even enemy of Christ; may not this form of speech be a scheme of Apostolick rhetoric? If any man love not our Lord Jesus, here it is, and shall be for the very present he is the interpretation of those thundering sounds, anathema maramatha, a miserable accursed creature; the very not loving, the chilling of that blessed passion within his breast, is the saddest curse that the Devill could designe his hatedst enemy.

Adde unto this that other branch of *Charity*, that ray which *Prometheus* in the figure stole from heaven to inspire, and warm the world with, that inferiour elementary fire, love of our fellow-men, our fellow-Christians, and tell me if there bee any thing so capable not onely of the *quam bonum*, but the *quam jucundum* too, that hath so much of the pleasant, as well as the vertuous in the composition. The ground of all pleasure is agreement and proportionableness to the temper and constitution of any thing; the reason, saith *Boethius*, that men love *Musick* so well, is the answerableness of the notes in that to those observed by nature in the fabrick of our bodies; And say me, is there any thing so agreeable and harmonically, so consonant to our reasonable nature, to the ingenuity of our kind, and consequently so universally delightful to all; that have not put off Man in exchange for Panther and Tigre, as that which Christ hath left us our duty, yea and our reward, the loving of the brethren; that language, that song of love that we are to practise here, that wee may

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chant it in heaven eternally? 'Tis said to be a speech of Christs which the Nazaren Gospel hath recorded, though our Bibles have not, (and it seems by St. John, all was not written which Christ spake to them.) *Nunquam latius niscum fratrem in charitate videritis.* There is no spectacle of delight to a Christian, nothing of value sufficient for a Disciple to rejoyce at, but to see his fellow Disciples embracing one another in love; and they say, Mahomet was such an admirer of this quality, that he once resolved to have inserted a precept of good fellowship among his laws, because he thought he had observed (though most ridiculously mistaken) that that which is indeed the bane, was a promoter of this Charity. I conceive I have the suffrage of all mankind, that Charity is a pleasing grace, and of the wisest and most pondering observers, that friendship is the only sweet neighbour and companion of life, that which being drained from its baser mixtures, (which would otherwise cause satiety) becomes the prime ingredient in the glorified Saints, of whose state we understand little, but that they are happy and love one another, and in that forever happy, that they forever love one another; *charitas nunquam excidit*, and so their blisse *nunquam excidit* neither: And then behold and admire the goodnesse of this yoke, Christs designe even in this life to set up charity, friendship above all virtues, as high as it is above all felicities, to settle that for the prime Christian duty, which hath most of present blessednesse in it, to make that our burthen which is our blisse, our yoke which is our boon, and withall to separate it from all those mixtures, which would either imbitter or shorten, soole or satiate our love, the lusts and excesses and the prides, that would make the most ingenuous delight either lesse ingenuous, or lesse delightfull, that love of my brothers virtues, love of his soule, love of the nature that Christ assumed and died for, and carried to heaven with him, love of the image of God in him, that most transporting durable pleasure; and all this will be abundantly sufficient to make up a second instance of the yokes *goodnesse* & pleasantnesse of this yoke.

A 3. shall be, by referring you to the most extemporary view of the Commands of the Decalogue, which Christ came not to destroy, but to fill up and perfect; Peniperance is the only Epicurisme; Continence or conjugall chastity the one Superstition

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to that black flame, that is the incontinents daily hell even in this life: But above all, that precept of the Old, and mystery on craft of the New Testament, [Thou shalt not covet] than of Contentment with whatsoever lot, the prohibition of ** all desire*, which seemeth such a gawling restraint to the carnall man, with his ** bored tub of insatiate desire* (as *Iamblicus* calls it) about him, but to him that hath taken this yoke upon him, ** Πίσθη* is the gainfull'st, not duty, but donative; not burthen, but purchase, and preferment, that any mortall is capable of. The Philosopher could resolve it the way to help any man to whatever he wanted, *detrahere cupiditatem*, to paire to much off from his desires, as his desires were larger then his fortune. To bring down his ambitions to his lot, would be as rich a prize, as the compassing, and acquiring all his ambitions: Contentment is (in earnest) the Philosophers stone, that makes gold of any thing; the *Pandora's box*, that hath all wealth, and honor, and pleasure in its disposing; makes the poorest Hermite, the richest possessor; the most scorned object, the most honorable person; the Recluse, or the mortified Christian, the most voluptuous liver in a Kingdome; every diminution that can come by the malice of men or devils, ** a pleasurable calamity*; ** Καλὸν ὁ πόθος* whilest the largest possessions in Nature, without this one skill, *τὸς πονηταί.* [*ἐκείνου τοῦ μαγιστοῦ*,] this sovereign piece of Alchymy, are still *Hec. ὁρ. ἡμ. l. r.* the perfectest beggery imaginable: The Devils whole map, or landskip of all the kingdomes and glory, if (as liberally offered, so) actually bestowed, is not able to satisfie the lusts of one eye; much lesse to fill up the angles and vacuities of one heart without it: That one prudent instruction of [*Quod sis esse velis nihilque malis,*] in one Poet, or [*Permites ipsi expendere munibus*] in another, or [*Ἄλλ' ἔλασθε μὲν, ἐμμελεστέ δὲ θεῶν*] in a third, [stand still and see the salvation of our God,] is a farre richer provision, then all their more glittering fictions of golden apples, & golden showers, & golden fleeces, and golden rods, that could make such sudden metamorphoses, yea and of the *χρυσὰ δίπλα*, the golden nets, the golden ages can afford us. In heaven, saith Christ, they neither eat, nor drink, marry, nor are given in marriage, and yet are better satisfied and pleased, than they below that are fed in *Mahomet's* dining room, or lodged in his *Seraglio*:

Od. 19.

Od. 16.

* Θάρσος δὲ
μακρῶ, οὐκ ἔστι
τῆ.
Hom. hym. in
Mars.

The not desiring those pleasures of life is to them the same thing with advantage, that the enjoying them is to others. (as the Poet that begs two things of Mars; * either valour for war, or peace, that he may not need that valour, would be richly provided for, which so ever was granted him: And this is, in Christ's language, being *ἰσὺς ἰσού, equal to the very Angels.* It seems, 'tis the Angels special advantage above us men, that they desire not the *τὰ τὰ παρὰ τῆ, the all these things*, which the luggage of flesh about us make to us so necessary, and not such crane, such engine to elevate our nature to this *ἰσὺς ἰσού, to this so Angelicall a state*, as *ἡ ἰνδουμῆ, this so liberal a science of contentment*, which not onely makes *Romances* creditable, finds mines in our closets, under every cushion we kneel on, rains down both the Indies into our treasury, sacrifices all our needs, fills all our vacuities, but is withall the noblest act of wisdom, of superiority of mind, of prowess, and conquest of our selves, that any Book but that of life, any place but heaven can give us story of; and therefore sure a *ζυγὸς χαριστός, a yoke, a command of Christ*, but that a benign and gainfull yoke in the third place.

A 4. instance I cannot omit, though I suppose the most vulgar phantasie hath prevented me in it, (because Aristotle hath a note in his Rhetoricks, that *some kind of auditors are most wrought upon by such*,) and that is from the Catalogue of the blessing graces, in the 5 of Mat. *Blessed are the poore in spirit, the meek, &c.* In the present, they are blessed, yea and would be so, though there were never a heaven of blessednesse behind for them. Will you examine the truth of this in a few of them?

1. Poverty of spirit, whether a preparation of spirit to be poore, and then 'tis blessed contentment that just now we parted with: or whether it be *humility*, blessed humility, and then, beside the advantages it hath toward another life, *grace to the humble, to the humble more grace*, and at last heaven to the humble, yea and more heaven (as in the learned rules of husbandry they are appointed * to plow, to sow, and to reap too all naked, humility portrayed by that nakednesse, being the onely auspicious posture, the onely catholick qualification for all seasons:) beside these advantages, I say, 'tis over and above, even in the eye of the world, an amiable gracefull quality, hath a present secular blessednesse in

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* Γυμνὸν σπε-
ρεν, γυμνόν τε
σower, γυμ-
νὸν δ' αὖ ἀνδρ.
Hef. 1, 2.

it, a calme of soule to it selfe, a controlling loveliness in respect of others, and a world of conveniencies attending it. 'Tis that wherein heaven and earth are met as rivals. God himselfe a making court to it, *With him will I dwell*, and in the Oracle, *παύροις νοσσι θεοσι Οὐρανῶν*, there are two residences, palaces, thrones for God, *heaven*, and *on humble soule*; and for men, a plain *πλατειὰ & ἐπιανθεῖον*, to them, an enchantment or charm of respect and love, where ever 'tis met with, whereas in the meantime, pride goes alone in state, onely with a traine of meniall scorn and curses after it, 'tis a kind of excommunicating sin, drives away confidants, counsellours, servants, graces, the very credit and reputation which it courts, all kind of company, but devils and parasites, that *pestimum genus inimicorum*, that worst kind of devill of the two. So true is that of Solomon, *Prov. 16. 19.* *Better is it to bee of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoile with the proud*, the comparison there is set as betwixt the lowly and proud, so betwixt the humble spirit, and dividing the spoile, there is no need to mention any benefit of humility, the humble spirit, it seems, is reward enough to it selfe; and all the proud mans prizes are not comparable to it in this life.

So for Meeknesse, 'tis a lovely grace again, *The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit*, 1 Pet. 3. a more gallant embroidery, more enamouring dresse, which hath more of the Agreeable in the look of it, than all the other helps of beauty can afford that sex, which is there spoken of: but especially that notion of meeknesse, that consists in obedience to our lawfull superiours, which (beside the many other inconveniencies of it, that *thy dayes may be long in the land*, &c. long life in a Canaan) is a most advantageous gainfull duty, such as if it had applications made to it, would infallibly leave the Prince the onely uneasie person in the Kingdome, because he onely were assigned the task, the painful; thanklesse, yet necessary task of *commanding*, and deprived of the *obsequii gloria*, that far more glorious, I will adde, & pleasant way of *obeying*. The glory of it such, as that Gerson having discerned in the Angels two habitudes, *one of * waiting upon * Mentemque* God, the other *in the ruling and managing of things below*, resolves, that *profundam circumcunct, Boisth.* if that Angel were to set himself out in a lustre, to triumph in a

Magnificat, it would be certainly in the Virgin *Maries* stile, *humilitatem famuli*, that he were a meek servant of Gods, rather than a Prince of so many myriads of subjects. And for pleasure, I shall profess my sense so farre from doting on that popular idoll, *Liberty*, that I hardly think it possible for any kind of obedience to bee more painful, than an unrestrained liberty: were there not some bounds of Magistrate, of Laws, of Piety, of Reason in the heart, every man would have a foole, they say, I adde, a mad tyrant to his Master, that would multiply him more sorrows, than the briars and thornes did *Adam*, when hee was freed from the blisse at once, and the restraint of Paradise, and was sure greater slave in the wilderness, then hee was in the enclosure: would but the Scripture permit me that kind of idolatry, the binding my faith and obedience to any one visible, infallible Judge, or Prince, were it the Pope, or the Musli, or the grand Tartar, might it bee reconcileable with my Creed, it would be certainly with mine interests, to get presently into that posture of obedience. I should learn so much of the Barbarian Ambassadors in *Appian*, which came on purpose to the *Romans* to negotiate for leave to bee their servants: 'Twould bee my policy, if not my piety, and may now bee my wish, though not my faith, that I might never have the trouble to deliberate, to dispute, to doubt, to chuse (those so many profitlesse uneasinesses) but onely the favour to receive commands, and the meeknesse to obey them; so demonstrably true is the *παρρησία* or *παρρησία*, (the very meeknesse is their blessednesse) and from thence this part of the gainfulnesse of this yoke.

I will detain you but with one more of that Catalogue, that of *Mercifulnesse*, the pleasurablest burthen in the world, there's no such kind of inward delight, and sensuality as it were. * *Liberality* is a kind of tickling to the soule, 'tis hard to conceal the pleasure of it, to keep it from Boyling over, from running out at mouth in vain-glory. To make a poor man happy, and by a seasonable alms, to reprieve and rescue him that was as it were appointed to death, is that God-like quality, as *Pythagoras* agrees with Christ, that kind of creative power, that of all things men are best pleased with, and therefore naturally they love those better,

* *Ὁς ἰσὺς ἰσὺς*
μὴ γὰρ δὸν, καὶ
ἐστὶν τοῦ δόξου
τίμητιναι.
 Hef. l. i.

tatter as their creatures, whom they have thus obliged, than any their liberallest benefactors: This the good natur'd tyrant Phalaris, if his image be truly drawn in his Epistles, took more joy in, than in all his other greatnesse, delighted that tyranny (that cost him and others so deare) to no other end, than that it might yield him that one pleasure, the power of obliging many; and accordingly he wooes, and beseeches to bee allowed this favour, nay quarrels and threatens his Bull to those that would not afford him this joy, *expressing out his largesse upon them.* This so delightfull a peece of duty, so perfect voluptuousnesse to any ingenuous man, is withall, let mee tell you, bee it never so incredible, the gainfulllest trade, the thrivingest way of merchandise for the wealth of this world, that any Projector can direct you to: Give mee leave for once to interpose in secular affairs thus far, as to assure you of that, that I will pawn my whatever is mine for the truth of it (and for which I conceive I have so many plain promises in the Scripture, that I were infidelity (in me, I am sure) to doubt of it) that the exercise of this duty of almes-giving was never the impoverishing of any family, but constantly the enriching. Let it be tried, and I will once set up the Ensurers office, that whatever goes out on that voyage, shall never nisse to come home with gain; there is no man that parteth with any thing for Christs sake, faith he, *but hee shall have an hundred fold more in this life.* Adde but this *reversion* to the *present*, this of gain, to that of delight, the policy to the even sensuall ravishment of it, and you will resolve that Christ was a good Master; that if you had been called to counsell at that great Parliament; had had your negative in that power of making laws for mankind, you would not have chosen a smother and more agreeable yoke for your selves, then this that Christ hath designed for you.

I promised to make this as evident by another head of probation, the enumeration of the speciall goods that have ever been prized by mankind; but that were a new Deed, and you have no stock of patience to hold out that voyage: Among all that have ever pretended to that title, I will suppose that of Honour hath gotten the primogeniture, supplanted all other pretenders in an ingenuous auditory. And therefore one word:

word to that, and I shall think I have made good my undertaking.

Honour, I conceive to bee the daughter of heroick action, and specially of victory: and is there any such sweeping triumphant Conquerour in the world, as the regenerate Christian? *ἡ νίκη τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, hee overcometh the world, Overcomes himself, that Lyon and that Bear that David combated with, his furious ragefull passions, *Αχελους* in all his shapes, and is alwaies in pursuit of that victory, *ἡ νίκη*, stil in the present, hee is alwaies overcoming; Overcomes enemies, * the injurious person by not rettributing of injuries, the very tyrant Persecutor, (whose adoration hee hath when hee can get none of his mercy, whilst t' other that is frighted out of his conscience and integrity, is scorn'd and kick'd into hell by him) yea and the Devil that *ὁ πονηρὸς*, the evil one, whom when the Christian resists, he conquers, (*ἡ νίκη*, hee shall flie from thee) yea and overcomes, and reproaches, and triumphs over all the world besides, practises those duties upon Christs commands, which neither Jew, nor Heathen ever thought themselves obliged to. *Athenagoras* can challenge all the Philosophers, and Law-givers of the world to equall Christ in one precept, or Christians in one practise of theirs, that of blessing of enemies, and no *Goliath* of Gath being able to answer his challenge, no uncircumcised Philistim, of confidence to meet him, (*Μὴν οὖν ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀλλ' ὅτι ἡλόν σφ' αὐτὸν*,) the Christian is the onely victor, he conquers the whole world about him, yea and those glittering courtiers of the superiour world, outvies, and conquers Angels in that one dignity of suffering for Christ, and so becomes the renowned't champion under heaven.

To this I should adde again, if I had not said so much of it already, and if't were not a baser earthier consideration, the profit and secular advantage, of which the Christian life, (let the insensate worldling think what hee will) hath the peculiar onely promise from him which hath the sole disposing of it. Some mistakes there are in judging what worldly prosperity is; Let it bee rescued from these mistakes, as particularly from that of signifying a present few months vicissitude of power and wealth (so sure to be paid (and confuted from deserving that title) by that of the Prophet, *When thou ceaseſt to ſpoile thou ſhalt*

be

* Πονηρὸς
ἀχελὺς.

be spoiled (let it signifie, as alone it doth truly signifie, this com-
petency, not that *superfluity*, which hath all the advantages, and
none of the pains of wealth in it, and no question the doing
our duty (though it be the present having of all for Christ's
sake) is that which doth not use to fail of the liberal profits of
hisself, the hundred fold more in this life, &c. all the true ad-
vantages of those possessions, without that addition which
would be a troublesome encumbrance; and which, if it were
added, would prove a most disadvantageous diminution. I
shall venture the brand and punishment that belongs to the
most infamous cheat, when ever any disciple of Christ shall
think fit to call mee his underminer or enemy for this doctrine,
when he shall think fit to tell me really that honesty is not the
only penderice, the surest foundation and treasure of worldly
bliss.

I have done with the particulars I promised: And now put
all together, and you will never think the Preacher a tyrant
more, never pity the melancholy, but envie the ravishment
of him that have taken up *this yoke* (yea though it have a *cross*
annext to it) to follow Christ, you will never put in for your
part in Mahomet's paradise, exchange your pure Gospel for a
grosser Alchoran, having in this very yoke of Christ a satis-
faction to all your longings, a richer harvest of joys in the
present possession, then all the false Prophets and false Christs
could feign for their clients in the latest revelation. And having
thus fortified you, I shall now challenge the rival Satan, to
come out to thee, to bring forth his pleas and pretensions for
thee, to interpose his exceptions if hee have any, why this
hour should not be the solemn *ora*, the date of thy long fare-
well to the kilns and fleshpots of Egypt, why this minute should
not be that of the blessed thrill trumpets sound; that of proclaim-
ing a *Jubile*, a manumission for thee (and all thy fellow cap-
tives) never to return to his gallies again, who are offer'd so
far a more gainfull, more easie, more pleasant, and more liberal
service. Satan, I am confident, dare not say his wages are
comparable to those, that here I have tender'd thee from
Christ; let him show thee in all his kingdoms of the earth, in
his treasury of gold, *or* *any* *other* *of* *the* *earth*, anything fit to bee

a rivall with the graces, not which the Poets feign, but which the Sermon on the Mount prescribes, (ingredient and constitutive of a Christian) both for the gain and pleasure, the commodity, and the delight of them even to flesh and blood, (when the one bedlam heat of youth, or lethargick custome of sin is over) and I shall no longer pretend to get any profelyte out of his hands.

And if after all this I must be content with the fate of other Sermons to have play'd a vain-glorious prize, *à la S. Pierre*, wounding none but the aire this whole hour together, If I must miscarry in this so charitable undertaking, and may not be heard when I come but to comply with you in all your interests, to direct you through one *Canaan* to another, to lay you out a paradise here for your rode to an eternall heaven, I confesse I am fallen upon a preevish auditory, a company of sick phanxies and crest-faln soules. For whose cure,

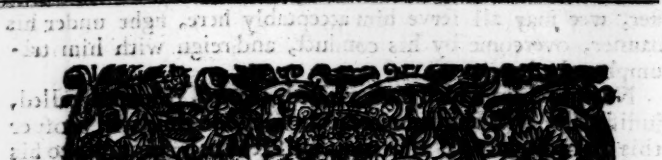
I might yet farther set off all this, and improve it into little lesse than a demonstration, by the view of the contrary not onely unpleasant, and unprofitable, but even painful tormenting trade of sin; those so many *limbo's* in passage to the deeper hel; that *Sodom* of filth and burning in the way to a *Tophet* of worms and flames. But I had rather phanxie you the *sheep* in *Aristotle* which the green bow would lead, than the *goats* in the same Philosopher, that the nettles must sting, whom the cords of a man might draw, than the whips of Scorpions drive into Paradise, into *Canaan*; Being confident that I have at this time revealed such precious truths unto you, that hee whom they doe not melt, and charme, and winne to enter into this so necessary, so fecible, so gainful a service, Father *Abraham's* divinity would prejudice and conclude against him, that neither will that man convert, though one should rise from the dead and preach unto him. If there bee any here of this unhappy temper, the onely reserve I have to rescue him is my prayer, that God would touch his heart, that hee would say *Epphattha*, that if there bee any consolation in Christ, any comfort of love, any virtue, any praise, any such thing as Paradise here, or heaven hereafter, we may every of us think of these things, and having entred into the blessed family of this good Master,

ster, wee may all serve him acceptably here, fight under his banner, overcome by his conduct, and reign with him triumphantly hereafter.

Now to him which hath elected, created, redeemed, called, justified us, will consummate us in his good time, will prosper this his ordinance to that end, will lead us by his grace to his glory : To him, &c.

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EPRA.



Ephraim's Complaint.

The III. SERMON.

JER. 31. v. 18.

*I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himselfe thus,
Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a Bullock
unaccustomed to the yoke : turne thou me, and I shall bee
turned.*



His Text is a sad soliloquy of a provoking afflicted
people. *Ephraim transfigrantem*, reads the Vulgar,
and sure **מחנורר** which we read *bemoaning*, would
be better rendred thus, The ten Tribes sealed up in
a black night, a fatal last captivity.

To parallel our state with *Israel* in the *transfigrantem*, is not
my designe, much lesse in the bemoaning, that's but a piece of
unreasonable pusillanimity, that our English hath imposed
upon the Text, and our Saviour hath inspirited us into a
more

more cheerfull guise in suffering, the ~~rejoice~~ ^{rejoice} and bee exceeding glad, the most blissfull joyous condition of any.

The parallel, I fear, will prove too perfect in the words themselves, which Ephraim then was overheard to utter, and perhaps some Invidious hearts may be a whispering now, and that I may prevent this parallel, I have pitch upon the words, I have surely heard Ephraim, &c.

The sense of Ephraim's ~~words~~ thus sadly muttered, 'tis possible you may not articulately understand, I shall briefly bee his Interpreter, by giving you a plaine paraphrase of the Verse.

I heard the ten Tribes in a melancholy reflexion on their state, thus whispering within themselves, We have long been punished by God, and no more wrought on by those punishments, then a wild unmanaged bullock, &c. not reformed or mended at all by this discipline (the Targum hath cleared the rendering ~~אין נשקט~~ ^{אין נשקט} We have not been taught, and the Septuagints [~~ἐκείνη δὲ οὐκ ἐδίδασκεν~~ ^{ἐκείνη δὲ οὐκ ἐδίδασκεν}] hath done so too) but then * Turn thou mee, return my captivity, restore us to our liberty, and our Canaan again, and then no doubt mee shall bee turned, reformed and manifested by that change.

to resist this interpretation, and that is caused by the ill rendering of them. They are to bee read thus, vers. 19. Surely when thou shalt have turned mee (or brought mee back) I shall repent, when thou shalt shew mee (thy mercies) I shall strike my thigh, (a ceremony which was used by the Jews in the dayes of Atonement or Expiation, ~~diebus~~ ^{diebus} ~~תשובה~~ ^{תשובה}) I am ashamed yea and confounded, because I beare, &c. (i. e. I am so troubled at my punishment, that I can have no leisure to mend.) 20. Is Ephraim my Sonne? (Filius honorabilis mihi, saith the Vulgar) is hee my darling? (filius delicatus my fondling?)

* And accordingly St. Chrysostome's Greek Copy must bee corrected, and read thus, ~~ἐκείνη δὲ οὐκ ἐδίδασκεν~~ ^{ἐκείνη δὲ οὐκ ἐδίδασκεν} Thou hast instructed mee, Lord, and I was not instructed, but I became as an untought, unmanaged ox or heifer. 6. ~~Sanctus esse Deum~~ ^{Sanctus esse Deum} Ver. 6. No. Test.

* That this is the meaning of the words will appeare by the consequents, when they are once rendered and understood aright, which now seem

ling?) i. e. Sure hee must thus thinke of himselfe, and beleeve of mee, that I am so fond that I cannot live without him; for else sure hee would never say thus, that he will not repent, unlesse hee bee well used, unlesse I bring him back to his countrey againe. *When I have spoken enough with him,* (admonished, advised him sufficiently) *I will in any wise remember him,* (i. e. his impenitence, and chastise this obduration of his) *therefore my bowells are troubled about him,* (i. e. I am very angry with him, for bowells note any violent affection,) *Can I in any wise have mercy on him?* (when all my chastisements work not upon him, when he will not amend without prosperity.) That this is the sense, and not that which our English inclines to beleeve, appears by this, that these Ten Tribes returned not, and therefore the next Ver. 21. must be applied to the Twelve Tribes, not the Ten.

Having thus laid bare the words before you, you will presently discern the summe of them, *A people unreformed under Gods rod, petitioning to bee released from that smart, because it did not mend them, pretending that prosperity would work wonders on them.*

And this you will dissolve into these three specialls, each worth our stay and pondering.

1. *Gods judgment, what course is fittest to reform sinners, not the delicate, but the sharp, that of smiting, Tu percussisti, Thou hast smitten.*

2. *Mans judgment, or the sinners flattering perswasion of himselfe, quite contrary to Gods; a conceit, that roses are more wholesome than wormwood, that prosperity will doe it better; and a bribing God with a promise, that it shall doe it, Converte & convertar, thy smitings have done no good on mee: Turn thou mee, and I shall bee turned.*

3. *The stating of this difficulty betwixt God and man, and in that, the falsnesse of mans judgement; and the fallaciousnesse of such his promise: 1. In respect of God, who will never send them prosperity, that adversity wrought no good on. And 2. of prosperity it selfe, which would never doe that work on those, if God should send it, intimated in the Prophets recounting and upbraiding this speech of Ephraim, I have surely heard Ephraim, &c.*

I begin first [with the first], Gods judgement, what course is fittest to reforme sinners, not the delicate, but the sharp, that of *smiting*.

And all the prooffe I pretend to have from this Text for this, is the *percussisti*, in the front. 'Tis clear, God had smitten Ephraim, and Gods actions are a declaration of his judgment, his *smiting* a sufficient assurance that nothing else is judged by God so likely to reforme Ephraim, and that upon this two plain heads of probation.

1. That whatever is, whatever is come to passe, is certainly Gods will it should be.

2. That what was thus Gods will, was designed to some benigne end, and in short, to nothing in Ephraim, but his reformation.

1. That whatever comes to passe is certainly Gods will. Not still his will, so as to be matter of decree (save onely of permission) that thou should'st doe it, and therefore even those things that are most necessarily to come, shall bee matter of the greatest guilt, and woe to those by whom they come, *Mat. 18. 7.* But his will, his over-ruling decretory will, that I should suffer it, his hand and his counsell, *αὐτοῦ τοῦ ᾤκτου*, *Acts 4. 28.* *predetermining that to be done*, which none but Herod and Pilate, Gentiles and Devil, against the expresse will of God, and his child *Jesus* were gathered together to doe. All the sin and furies, guilt and damnation of hell may be in the *νομή*, the doing or executing Gods will, (as believe it, there is not a more formidable trade in the world, than that of which Satan alone hath the Patent, and men doe but intrench on hell; whensoever they exercise it, that of the *licitor & carnifex*, of being Gods rods, Gods executioners) but then all the mercy, and all wisdom, bounty, and divinity, sometimes the redeeming of a world, in the *ἡ χάρις*, the being done. Not the softest affliction, or bloudest tyranny had ever come into the world, had not God permitted, & for our sins decreed to permit the dores to be open for it. Not the lightest wound, or deepest furrow on a poore Christians shoulders, but hath characters of Gods hand in it, superscribing him *ἡ χάρις τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, in Ignatius's phrase, the *coyn of Christ*, a stamp of his impressing; and as the Painter had so interweaved his

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own face in *Minerva's* picture, that you could not behold one without discerning the other, so when the image of Christ is imprest on us, I mean the image of the crucified Saviour, the thornes on the head, the spitting on the face, the sponge of vinegar and gall at the mouth, and the one wound on the whole body, when the conformity to this image of the Son, Rom. 8. is sealed upon us, that seal of the *Tiphereth*, or the *Magnus Adam*, (as the Cabalists are wont to call it) I mean, of the archetypall sufferer Christ, is imprest so hard, that it prints quire thorow the bottom of him, leaves the impression on the *Malcuth*, the bride, the house of *Israel*, the poor crucified Church here below, when I say, that sad original is thus copied upon us, there is no avoiding the sight, no escaping the acknowledgement of that great Painters face, that drew these parallel signatures both on Christ and us, or in *St. Paul's* phrase, predestined us to be conformable to that image of his Son, *ἀποκατασταθῶμεν*, Col. 1. by way of correspondence, of antitype, to fill up the remainders of his sufferings in our flesh, and as punctually elected us to this *ἀναστροφή*, this co-suffering for, and after Christ, as to the *ἀποδοξάσει*, we trust hee hath, to the also being glorified with him.

*Κατὰ τὴν ἐκτίμησιν,
Ἀκτὶς 5. 41.*

These are the *ἰχθυοὶ*, *ἰσθῆς*, literally, and exactly, the prints or brands of Christ, the works of his hands, as well as the transcripts of his sufferings, and as this may give us a perfect satisfaction in whatsoever the most smitten condition, a *κατὰ τὴν ἐκτίμησιν*, all joy when we are thus vouchsafed and dignified, especially if we shall have transcribed the *active* as well as *passive* part of his image, or if this suffering teach us to transcribe it, so will it be a first proof of the point in hand, a declaration of Gods opinion by his prescriptions, that nothing is so fit for our turn, as *smiting*.

But then this first proof will not perfectly come home to the conclusion, unless we improve and sharpen it with the second, that *this smiting*, as it already appears to be Gods will, so 'tis by God designed to *Ephraim's* good, the greatest good for rebellious *Ephraim*, the bringing him to repentance, and that if any thing else could have tended so directly to that end, *Ephraim* had never been thus smitten. The foundation of this lies in the superlative love

love of God extended even to enemies, and that evidenc'd by his manner of prescribing that to us, with an *ab exemplo*, from the example of his owne perfection. *Mat. 5. 48.* who, it seems by that argument, is a benefactor and *blessor* even of enemies, and whatever he sends to the most hostile Ephraim; it is method of deliberate charity, the bitter'st *Recipe's* design'd on purpose (neither by chance nor malice, those two heathen principles of theology, *τοῦτο & φθόνος δαιμον*, but, I say, on purpose) from love and pond'ring, from judgement and from bowels, as that which as long as there is any hope of recovery, will do it, if any thing, and therefore cannot in charity be withdrawn, while there is hope; and when there is none, is then to be spared, not lavish'd out, like *Galens* generous medicaments, that must not be dishonored, or cast away on the desperate Patient, but preserv'd to do noble and signall cures, on those that are capable and worthy of them.

Such are these caustick plaisters, preparatory to the Incarnative, the knife and the launce that *Hipp:* reckons among the *μαλακιστικὰ φάρμακα*, the mollifying preparations, that the Physician must always carry about with him: This is the new, and, as late artists tell us, the truer notion of the *feaver*, not as of a disease, but an indeavour, and strife of nature to cure one, as when there is a thorne in the hand, or burthenous excrement in the body, nature heaves and plunges, puts it selfe into a passion and flame to thrust it out; and then to cure that *feaver*, to quench that flame, to allay or trash nature in that march, is to dis-arme the friend, and side with the adversary: and such it seems was the messenger of Satan to Saint Paul, that medicinall thorne in the flesh, to prick the rising, and let out the putrid humour, that he might not be puff'd up; and exalted above measure, and God would not be so unkind, as to hearken to his importunity, in giving it leave to depart from him.

If you will further see the opinion and judgement of God in this matter, I shall mention but one evidence more of it, the notes of his constant practise thorow the whole Scripture.

The briers and thorns were immediately designed by God
H to

to the first sinnes, to repair the errours, and crimes of Paradise.

Afterward, the *rod*, was the onely engine, by which *Moses* was to work all his miracles, on the *rock*, on the *Egyptians*, on the more *obdurate Israel*; all the exchange and variety was onely this, the *rod* sometimes transformed into a *Serpent*, or else multiplied into an *army of Frogs*, and *Flies*, and *Locusts*, when an obdurate rebellious sinner, a *Pharaoh* was to be *sofined*: and if you mark it, when upon the importunity of *Moses*, God was perswaded to withdraw that *rod*, to intermix deliverances, these never wrought any good upon *Pharaoh*, when *Pharaoh* saw that there was *respice*, *respice* but for a minute, he hardened his heart, &c. *Exod. 8. 15.* An observation that made *St Basil* resolve, that 'twas *Gods patience*, or *μεσσηνία*, that hardened *Pharaohs* heart, the removings of his plagues, intercalations of mercy: the taking of the water from the fire, and letting it cool again, that as *Aristotle* saith, makes it freeze so hard and so speedily. The devill and the Magicians would have been better at the cure of a hard heart, then *Moses* and his prayers; they could onely conjure up more bloud, and more frogs, but could not remove any, and that it seems was the most likely meanes to have kept him humbled, and therefore in the New Testament, 'tis the Apostles saving method in such great cures to call in the Devil into consultation, to deliver men up unto Satan as the last and surest remedy; the continued stripes and the no respice, to give the inpenitent to drink of the ἀγρίον καὶ ἐγκατέκλειον, in the *Apoc.* that hath so posed the Interpreters, the unmixt mixt wine, the all myrrhe but no water, the all manner of imbittering, hightning, but none of the allaying, cooling mixtures in it, and so still the portion of our crucified Master, i. e. by the way of this Text, all smitings, and disciplining; reall, corporeall inflictions of Satan, to the diseasing and destroying of the flesh, and it seems no popular Empiricall means so probable, for the ἵνα πρὶν αὐτὸν ὁ σὸς that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

And then my brethren, to bring down this first particular unto ourselves, was there ever such a course of soure discipline, such a delivering up unto Satan, as this Nation of ours hath for some

some yeare been under? Was there ever such real buffetings, not like that in Saint *Jeroms* Dreame, to convert the *Ciceronian* into a *Christian*, but as upon a waking *Bedlam*, a daily constant exercise of stripes, or like that on the possessed in the Gospel, the spirit taking us, and tearing us till we foame againe, (and our base reviling and slandering one another, is that foam) ô how many sad falling fits hath this poore demoniack been wrestling under, and unlesse an over-ruling mercy interpose, perhaps the bitterest part of the agony still to come, in the struggling of life to returne again! Is not this the antitype of a smitten *Ephraim*? I speak not this particularly of those that have been the sufferers under this rod; beleve it; the catalogue of the smitten is larger then so: You may mark it, that the Rod it self is smitten, whensoever it smites, at every blow wounded and torn by way of repassion.

And so the most distant atomes of this kingdome are once united, in this one sad notion of stripes and wounds fit to become one common *ἔσχατος*, *ἔσχατος*, precentor in the first note of this sad anthem, the *flagellasti me*, *thou hast smitten me*, ô that we could get but one word farther, joine all in the *ἀπορίσιν*, or counterpart, *flagellatus sum*, in the reall passive, and *I was smitten*.

This were but justice unto God that hath taken all this pains with us, been at such an expence of culters with these stony fallow hearts of ours. You shall see how rhetorically he expostulates it, *Amos* 3. 4. *Will a Lyon roare in the forest to have no prey? shall iny chidings and threats, and thunderbolts tearing your Ephod and your Altar, rending not the vayle, but the Temple it selfe from the top to the bottome be spent all to no purpose? Will a young Lyon give forth his voice from his den that he may take nothing?* (that is the best rendring of the place) shall all this tragicall scene designed and acted by God (all but our sin-parts in it) be but a beating of the air, or a scourging of the sea, unprofitably? no one sin in such a legion brought downe, or vanquish'd by all this storming?

Nay, shall we at once evacuate and reproach, fustrate and defame his methods? pronounce unto all the world that God

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hath lost his designe for want of conduct? shall we set up for the master wits? get Proselytes away from heaven to Ephraim's heresie? preach backe againe to Gods rod? and tell him, that afflictions are very improper engines to make batteries on souls? If so, then are we just the *indomiti juvenes* in this Text, so perfectly untamed after all this smiting; I wish we could say as true, in that that follows, the [*Turne thou us, and we shall be turned*] that the resolvednesse not to benefit by stripes, were not so like the blasphemy against the holy Ghost, that when this hath failed, any other method might hope to prove succesful. That prosperity might do it, was Ephraim's phantasie, though distant enough from Gods, which brings me to my second particular, *Man's judgment, or the sinners perswasion of himselfe, that roses are more wholsome then wormwood, that prosperity will doe it better, and a bribing God with a promise that it shall doe it; Converte & convertar, turn, &c.*

And this we shall not fully carry away with us, if we do not view it distinctly in three notions:

1. As 'twas a perswasion or act of belief in Ephraim, that so 'twould prove: *turn thou me, &c.*

2. As a promise that it should be thus: *turn and I will, &c.*

3. As in truth it was, an excuse to get off the Rod, or to procrastinate the repentance, the present method of smiting may be superseded, *turn thou me, &c.*

The first, an act of judgment in Ephraim. The second, of temporary resolution. The third, of artifice and disguise. In each of these Ephraim may chance to prove our mirror, 'twill be worth your patience that I shew you how. And

1. As it was a perswasion, or act of judgment in Ephraim, that prosperity was the way to make them better.

'Twas a truth of Gods owne pronouncing; that his thoughts are not like our thoughts, consented to by the Philosopher, *ὅτι δέμας ἀνθρώπου ἐκούσιος, ὅτι νόημα*, saith Xenophanes, God hath no more of our phantasies then of our shapes, heaven earth are seldom of an opinion. Twill be most pertinent and visible in matters of his providence.

When God hath designed the crosse, the constant post and stage in our gesses to heaven; we must needs set up another
economy,

economy, phasie it a kingdome of uncompoundd felicittes, croud all the Godly into one throne, and the ungodly into one footstool, bring Christ unto this earth again, on a second more prudent errand, to have an age of reigning, not of suffering, among a world not of followers, but of fellow-kings, and so, in the Apostles judgement, inclose him in a kingdome of bastards, whom we are resolv'd (quite contrary to Gods pronouncing) to be the onely sons and saints of the Millennium. To this end must Prophetes be precipitated, and what belongs to the future (perhaps long ago past) conversion of the Jewes, or our yet more future blisse, shall be all anticipated presently, the Crosse condemn'd and banish'd out of the world, and none like to be of the Order of the new Disciples, but he that will cast off that unchristian luggage, and so not follow Christ. Can there be a greater contrariety unto Christs judgment, a more perfect Antipodes to all that hath hitherto been Gospel, then that which by pulling out one pin in the scene, hath been thus shifted into its stead?

And as in the generall, so in the particular too, [*In what state sœver I am, therewith to be contented*] is not to be had by Saints Pauls own confession; without a *μεγάλον*, a great deale of mysterious instruction, such as in the *Eleusinia sacra* cost the Client so many sighing patient yeares of attendance and purgation; before he could ascend to the *πλάτῃ* & *ἰσοπείῃ*; the heights of christian contentment: but especially to have any good opinion of afflictions, when they are actually on our shoulders, to be so tame as to think such a proportion of earth, which wormwood imbibed, can prove usefull or medicinall to any.

Will not a brave golden shewr of cordials dispell poysons, raise a collaps'd habit of soul, infuse a new stock of spirits, more probably far, then a course of steel or quicksilver? Would not an army of sun-beams, that have light as well as warmth in them, subdue and thaw the most hardned heart in the whole quarry, dissolve the most icy crysall spirit, better then a stroke of Moses rod, or a crack of thunder.

Thus hard it is for flesh and blood to believe that God can chuse best for us: *Are not Abanah and Parphar rivers of Damascus, better then all the waters of Jordan? May not I wash there and be clean?* Would not a little kind usage, a few fatherly kisses and embraces, an inheritance, or portion given me in my hand, a fair demeanors to keep hospitality upon, be more likely to work upon wel-natured sinners, that do not love to be forced, will be as thankfull as any man living, if they may be courteously treated, but with a froward handling cannot chuse but shew themselves unsavoury? This driving and forcing men to repentance, is a violation of the Gospel-liberty, a kind of constraining and violencing of the spirit, if it be enslaved to these beggerly rudiments of stripes and terrors, and favors much of the spirit of legall fear, that *Hagar or mount Sinai*, that engendrich unto bondage, quite contrary to the free-born *Sion*, or *Jerusalem-spirit*, whereby we cry *Abba father*.

Farther yet, I have heard Ephraim a murmuring as well as a bemoaning, I am so encumbred with the pressures of a villainous world, such a hurry of passions of indignation and impatience, of a tumultuous grief and shame, that I have neither heart, nor joy, nor leisure to mend any thing. Thus it followes, *verse 19. I am ashamed and confounded, because I bear the reproach of my youth; no possible reforming in such a state of confusion, such a kind of Tophet, and hell as this.*

And I heartily wish, I did not speak to men that can think Ephraim in the right all this while, that with *Jonas* in the withering of the Goard can justifie against God himself, that they do well to be angry even unto death, that can really perswade themselves that afflictions are not for their turn, that they are as noxious to their soules, as to their bodies, that as *Hippocrates* resolved of the Scythians, that the *xid-pa-la*, if they came from God (that all the curses and il-turns that heaven had to spare) would be confined to the poor, because their wants set them always a murmuring, and a blaspheming of God: So, I say, I wish we had not some of that Atheists conceit, that cannot tell how to imagine, that stripes would bring forth any thing, but clamours and execrations, more ferity, more sullen Atheisines, more bestiality to drown, Opiate potions to benumn the sense of

of our calamities; And many of us do this out of pure judgment that affluence is far the more probable way toward mending, that a *Canaan* were able to inspire *Israelites*, as the good soyle in *Plutarch* was thought to infuse poetry into the Oracle: and having experience to demonstrate the first part of *Ephraims* speech, being no more wrought on by all Gods smiting, then the most intractable steers, they go on with a presumption of the truth of the second, *that prosperity will do all, that adversity hath not done: Turn thou me, &c.*

But then 2^{ty}. I told you there was a second notion of these words, as they are an act of promise and temporary resolution, that if God will turne our captivity, we will infallibly amend.

And 'tis very possible at a distance for a man to think himself in earnest when he so promises: 'Twas *Dio's* observation of *Nero's* Mother (that profest her self content to be kill'd by her Son, on condition he might be Emperour) that 'tis very ordinary at a distance to enter such obligations; we'l venture any the foreest payment from Satan after this life, so we may get but his kingdome of the earth, his *Seraglio* of carnall felicities at the instant. The hypocrite or falsehearted professor will make any bargains with God for the future, will not doubt but to be a disciple of Christ, so he may but first go and bury his Father, or with *Jephtha's* daughter, have a month or two to go up and down the mountains, and bewail her virginity; she and her fellowes: Be it the Cloyster or the Altar, chastity, or death it self (as you know 'tis not resolv'd which 'twas that that vow belong'd to) a little present felicity will be sufficient payment for either of them, only when the date of the undertaken returning begins to commence, when the fore part of the bargain comes to be perform'd, the *Nero* to kill, as well as to reign, the Cloyster, to be actually entred, and with that the ἀμεταμέλητος ὀρκισμός, a vow never to return *ad seculum* again; then the votary begins to understand himselfe better, finds it as improper to turn penitentiary in a Palace, as it was in a Prison, as irrationall to be condemn'd to *Tantalus*, as to *Prometheus* fate, to be abstemious in a river of delights, as patient of fasting to a mountain of torments: and had he known it, that he should thus have been taken

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at his word, have had his turning required as soon as his captivity was turn'd; his mortification expected at the restoring of his peace, and with the festivity and rest, the holiness also and services of a Sabbath and Jubilee, he would have even courted his rod, embraced his pleasanter gyves, or dunghill, have continued a slave in *Aegypt*, rather than thus be circumcised in *Canaan*; have been bored through the eare by his old Master, rather than thus dignified with the title of *Freeman*, & denied the *libertinisme* that belongs to it.

But the truth is, there is a third notion of these words, which will be a *Supersedeas* to that of a *promise*, and that is, as this art of promising, is onely an excuse, or shift, or pretence to get off the present smart of the Rod, or the importunity of the Prophet to escape the smiting, or the being smitten, the crosse or following of Christ.

Should the unmanaged Horse (in stead of the Bullock in the Text) desire his Rider to put off his spurs and whip, and at once to ease him both of bit and saddle, and then promise to be the tractablest beast in nature, but till then profess that all those instruments of discipline should never tame him, I beseech you, what would be thought of this oration? would you certainly be perswaded that the beast spake reason, that 'twas a serious designe of a generous obedience, a gallantry of a voluntary unconstrain'd vertue? If so, you may beleeve the beast within you, that makes the same proposall to God, and you. In the mean 'twill not be amiss to resolve, that he that hath exceptions to Gods methods, hath some other Master to whom he is more inclinable to retaine, he that will not serve God for naught, that is all for the thriving piety, the gainfull Godlinesse, that must have his reward, just as he is a doing the worke, a payment in hand, even before he sets about the duty, will sure bring in little profit to God be he fed never so high, very thin returns of good life for all his donatives. He that will not now mend under the rod, edifie by so many dolefull Lectures, as have been read on out of a *Zachary's* and a *Jeremy's* roll, that hath arrived to *Theodoreti's* *ὑπερβόη*; a mind that can reverberate judgments, and make them rebound, in more provoking sins against the hand that sent them, is of the *Pharaoh*, the anvil-temper, and; let him pretend, or promise, or flatter himselfe what
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he please, by holding out his *White flag* for treaty, he desired to be in case to maintain his fort still against God, and 'tis it not victualling, and bribing; but starving and storming, must helpe to drive him out of it: which brings me to the third and last particular.

The stating of this difficulty betwixt God and man, and in it the falsenesse of mans judgment and fallaciousnesse of such his promise, both in respect of God, who will never send them prosperity, that adversity wrought no good on, and of prosperity it self, which would never doe the work, if God should send it.

For the first, in respect of God, who will never send them prosperity, that adversity wrought no good on. This you may judge of, not onely by that great rule of state in heaven of [*Gods resisting the proud*] and [*surely God heareth not sinners*] compounded into one Gospel-aphorisme, [*the incorrigible begger can never have audience in heaven, nor returns from thence, save onely of stones and thunderbolts*] but especially on that wise ground of divine œconomy, on which all these stripes are sent.

Gods first method of calling us off from the world, is the soft, and friendly, the [*having therefore these promises, let us cleanse our selves,*] a heaven, a paradise, and a *Canaan*, to confirm *Angels*, and bring men to blisse, to draw with the cords of a man, with the bands of love; and if that prevails, afflictions are superseded, (and were it not, that there is another speciall use of them, to illustrate our *Christian* vertues, and improve our crown, and withall to confute *Satan* when he accuses us of unsincerity, the reformed *Christian* should never be thus exercised.) But when prosperity will not work, when the calmer Phylick is digested into nourishment of the disease, then, and not till then, the vomit comes in on the reserve, the tempest and deluge to drown those serpents, that had ingendred and thriven in the shallow and still waters, as to them that are sick of perfumes the noysome smell is the onely cordiall: and then, as *Cusanus* observes, there is in God *coincidentia contrariorum*, this severity is the only mercy, these wounds the only balsome, the hostile approach, the most obliging charity; and as by the heathen artifice in *Hero's* *πυριπυρ*, as soon as ever the fire was kindled upon the *Akar*,
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the plummetts fell, and the dores flew open, and the God appeared upon the chair of state; so by this rarifying power of flames, and judgments the earthy obstacles are oft removed, and the deity set up and enthron'd in the heart; and then sure 'twas good for that man that he was in trouble. And generally the rule is true in Gerson, *Omnes paene non exterminantes sunt medicinales*, all mulsts that are not undoing (and our law admits not of any, but such as are *salvo contenemento*) are a peece of charity and physick in the Judge. For this cause are many sick and weak, nay many saln asleep; if we will beleeeve the Apostle) and all these judgments of the Lord, the onely antidotes against that fatal poyson, the being condemn'd, and ruin'd with the world.

And then you will not blame the wit or piety of the old Heathens (*who deified all their Benefactors*) that they had Temples for such feavers as these, the friends that had so obliged them, I'm sure Saint *Augustine* makes it his wonder, that upon that score they had not erected one Altar more, *impietati hostium*, to the impiety and rapine of their enemies, which was constantly (if they had but the grace to make use of it) so royall a Benefactor..

The soveraign power of this *Recipe* being thus considered, you will give it leave to be the last in Gods prescribing, and the most depended on; and the *Patient* being not fit for the cost, or trouble of any farther experiments, when these have prov'd successlesse, the greatest mercy of the Physitian is to leave him with these cupping glasses at the neck, that if there be ever a spark of vitall spirit within, it may by this assistance discharge it self of that poysonous vapour, and yet possibly overcome and quit the danger; but if not, 'tis sure too late to divert to any new course; the fetching out the cordials will but enhance the bill, and maintain the lamp a little longer, will never beget a new stock of spirits, or spring of life, when 'tis once so quite exhausted; and therefore the conclusion is clear, and the Prophet *Amos* hath exprest it by an apt resemblance, *Amos 3. 5. Shall one take up a snare from the earth, and take nothing at all? Shall God remove his judgments from a nation, while the sins are still at the high water? Infallibly he will.*

will not do in: If he do, 'tis a sad presage, his soft hand is but absolute desertion, the leaving to our selves, is the giving us up to our bloudest enemies, that unseasonable heaven is the far worse *Tophet* of the twain.

Let but the present calamities work the cure on us, and then all the *Canaan*s in the world are ready at hand to perfect it, the old peaceable flourishing *England*, hid under that heape of thunderbolts, is ready to be our *bath* and *palestra* once again, to refresh and confirm what was thus acquired, and to beget a whole treasure of health in us; but till then, *prosperity* is quite beside the purpose, a meer ignorant Empirick-prescription which hath nothing of purging or medicinall in it, should it be administred, 'twould never reform, or convert any; the demonstrating of which, is the undertaking of the last minute of my last particular; that in respect of *prosperity* it self, which in this case will never do the work if God should send it.

The beast that is not tamed or humbled by the whip or goad, the rich pasture in all reason will never break, or work on. The liberty of that field is a new temptation, and the plenty strengthens for a sturdier resistance, and both *liberty* and *plenty*, *respite* and *peace* are apt to be mistaken for a reward of the former *stubbornesses*, far from any restraint of them.

Will you see it exemplified in the most eminent stories of *deliverances*, and *prosperities*, that the Scriptures takes notice of? that will enforce the conclusion *a majori*.

You have *Lot* of *Sodom*, and *Noah* of the old *World*, the remnant preserved from that double deluge of fire and water, and as soon as they are landed in their faire havens, the same calme shipracks both, and their *prosperity* is branded by *holy Writ* for the mother of their two bestiall sins, *incest* and *drunkennesse*.

Look back from thence into *Eden*, and the e that happy at once and innocent paire, are not by *plenty* secured from *coveting*; *beauty*, and *sweetnesse*, and *desire of knowledge*, the perfections and temptations of *Paradise*, are the ruine to *innocence* it self; and then what do you think the *Swine* would have done there,

when the *Lambs* committed such early riots? what a havock would an army of *Roysters* have made in *that Garden*, where *Adam* himself (if you will beleeeve the *Rabbins* rendring of the *Psalmists*, *לֵל נֶלֶם*) abode not one night in *that* state of blisse, and honour?

Passé we from *paradise* unto *heaven* it self, where there is neither eating nor drinking, marrying nor giving in marriage, and so no roome for carnall sins to doe any thing but sterue in, yet even there was matter for the filthinesse of the spirit to feed on, the *Angels* can grow proud and ambitious there, stumble and fall in plaine heaven; adore and worship (and so damne) themselves in the absence of all other Idols. And therefore from these experiments 'twould be no boast or hyperbole to affirme, (and perhaps worth your pains to consider it) that if a profane impenitent should (upon an impossible supposition) be so prosperous as to enter heaven it self, it would be very far from reforming or converting him; such a gratifying and rewarding of sinners would but confirm them in their course; as when an habituate demure adulterer, oppressor, or the like, gets confident of his salvation, with these crimes unreformed about him, there is not an engine imaginable to fetch him off from his sins, but by first robbing him of his assurance; he must be thrown out of his imaginary usurp'd heaven, before he will be really capable of comming thither. 'Tis true, there will be there in those sacred courts some good motives and attractives to reformation, examples of all the contrary vertues, if he were malleable enough to be controll'd by such; the *Seraphims* pure divine flames of love, to reproach and upbraid his profaine uncleane fires of lust, and rage; a quiet calme subordination of saints and *Angels* under that great Theocracy, to shame that petulancy of his *ὁ δὲ δυνάστης*, the irregularity of his rebel lusts against the *ὁ δὲ ἀντοκράτωρ*, the monarchy of that divine beame within him, the *Principalties* and powers, to make him blush and glow at those vile servilities, and mean submissions to the paultry sins, that he stands guilty of; a whole volume of patterns of all holinesse in every Saint, to reproach and libell his impurities: But when he hath in himself that one great example; that lust and pride, the filthinesse of the flesh and spirit can inherit life, (as suppose the impenitent in heaven, and he hath this example

example) he will then rather expect to be imitated himselfe, to gain *Profelytes* to his delicate popular thriving *heresie*, to set up a new *faction*, or *society in heaven*, all for prosperous liberty, then conform to that old regular subordination, that *prelacy* or *hierarchie* of *Archangels*, and *Cherubims*, and *Saints*. In a word, we should have, in such a new supposed platform, more hope to bring over, and bebauch Angels, (were they not confirm'd) then danger of being disciplin'd, or reform'd by them, even raise *Lucifers* expectation, that he might return to his old country again, at least give him more ground for that hope, then *Origens* charitable *heresie* could ever afford him; and all this though impossible enough, yet far more probable, then for uncleane *Atheists*, or hypocrites, remaining such, to enter into the kingdome of Heaven, and then begin to reforme, when they are entred.

That divinity that first enstates impenitents in pardon, and so in blisse; and then will have them mend by way of *gratitude*, supposes a degree of piety and generosity in those impenitents, that nothing but a *thorow conversion* can plant in them. He that having a false graceless debter to deale withall, will first absolutely cancell his bond, and then expect that paymeat from *gratitude*, which law and Sergeants could not extort from him, shall be allowed to be of *Ephraims* mind, that the Sunbeams may dissolve that stone, that the hammer could not. The Platonists and the Papists have been a little more ratiounall in ordering their fancies, placing their *imaginary Purgatory* in their way to Heaven; not at the journeyes end: and, if you mark it, they are not *Purgatory streams*, but flames which they dream of, a *caldarium*, or scalding bath, or furnace, to fetch out, and burn up drosse, not a flowrie *Elysian field* or *Paradise*, onely to upbraid it.

I shall make challenge to your memories and experiences, Did you ever see any man flatter'd and gratified out of his sins, by the encrease, and amiableness of his temptations? And yet it is certaine, that *prosperity*, and ease, and peace, abound more with these then any other state, *Acrioribus stimulis animum explorant*, in Tacit, and as he, *felicitate corrumpimur*; so because they have no changes, therefore they feare not God, could David say, their uninterrupted felicities first made *Atheists* of them: It is likely that

a few more houres of those joyes would returne them Saints?

The Hermits indeed in *Theodosius* the youngers time, left their solitude, and came to study Perfection in the Kings Palace: but sure 'twas, because they were (or else conceived themselves to be) advanced and arrived already to a spirituall height, to a full pancratick habit, fit for combats and wrestlings, and so came out to practice in these *Agones*, that is, not because there were conceived to be lesse, but more temptations: And yet even for such, I should not be over-forward to commend the designe. Without question, the still privacie had been the prudent course. For so *Licetus*, that tells us of some Lamps which under ground continued light for sixteen hundred yeares, concludes his observation, that as soon as ever they were brought forth into open aire, they went out immediately. And I need not tell you, how many zealous burning, or faire-shining Votaries the world hath had, whose imprison'd, retir'd, cloyster'd, Piety hath done so too.

And do not think that 'tis an appetite to other mens possessions, or an insidious praising of a lost treasure, that so they that have taken it up may return it again, if I tell you that, which tis not these times have taught me, that affluence, and abundance of riches, of ease, of even Peace it selfe, is generally no safe commodity; there is not one of a hundred, but is lesse Christian for it. *Jeshurun waxed fat*, began to thrive in the faire pasture, and, it followes, *he kicked* presently. And 'tis *Aristotles* Maxim, *πλῆθος ὑβερσινὺς ποιεῖ* Riches make men insolent and intolerable. Nay we have mention of the πολλὰ καὶ κέρη εἰς δυνάμειν φέρειν, *Esther* 16. 2. and of *ferre fortunam* in *Horace*. 'Tis a weight that many are not able to move under, the talents of gold are the saddest lading, ready to sinke old *Charons* boate in *Lucian*. 'Tis sure that very bunch in the *Camels* back that made it so hard for him to enter that strait passage: And unlesse you have some confidence, and some experience of your extraordinary gifts, or faculty, of conquering the temptations of wealth and rest particularly, of taking out the sting, and teeth, that are peculiar to that Serpent, the exact skill of al-
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laying this quick-silver, beleeve me that peice of ancient advice would be no unsafe counsell to many of us, *when riches encrease*, instead of *setting the heart on them*, not so much as to lend them an eare, to be deafe to the knocks of riches, when they are most importunate at the door. All the joyes, and high tastes, that they can helpe you to, being not able to requite you for the damning sin of one insolence, one luxury, one impiety, nay for the paines, that not only *Petrarch*, but *Aristotle*, the Heathen, as well as Christian Moralist tels you: it will cost the rich or idle man, to resist those temptations, much lesse to repaire the wound of a wasted conscience, that the courting of wealth, when tis shy or coy, the *βούλη πάντων*, the resolving to become rich, or continue so, doth constantly cost us.

This is the most perfect earnest in the world, never was there Christian of any extraordinary proficiency, but was resolv'd of it as of a principle, and therefore put it into his prayers, not onely under the Petition against *leading into temptation*, but interpreted his *daily bread*, to that sense, *ὅτι τῆς αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν ἡμῶν ἀρεμίζοντα*, that which is most agreeable to every of our conditions, the *neither poverty, nor riches*, with *Solomon*, but the *panem dimens nostri*, that which is just even to the wants or cravings of a regular appetite, which is the only wholesome diet in the world.

And as this hath sufficiently demonstrated the doctrine, so will it prove the most advantageous rise for Use and Application, and the conclusion of the whole matter. And that is in the Prophet *Micah's* phrase, to *shew thee O man what is good*, good to thee as thou art a man, in al thy capacities, to put thee upon a project, give thee a patent and monopoly of the greatest treasure, and riches of the world, a secret that the worldling hath not known; for had he known it, he would never have disquited the neighbourhood for such a warme prize, snatcht just out of the mint, such a singeing weight of gold that will so soon fire its passage, and flie from him again. And it is that treasure of Christ shall I say? nay, of *Epicurus's* Philosophy, (as for want of his owne writings the Greek Scholiasts on *Aristotle* are faine to tell us.) In the one, the *γαληνὴν καὶ ἀνιδεχρὴν τῆς ψυχῆς κατὰ φύσιν*, the calme

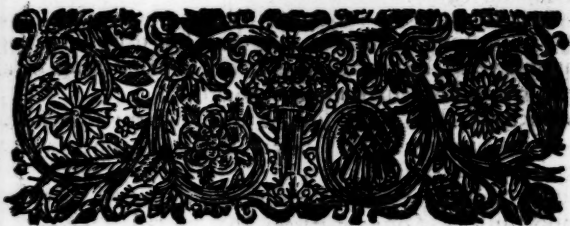
calme untroubled constitution of mind, that all the *νέμεσις*, the present or possible tempests of this world (which are all extrinsecall, perfectly extrinsecall to a Christian) have not in their power to afflict or disquiet, to put out of that magnanimous pace of equable constant piety: In the other that not effect or fruit of faith, but faith it self, 1 *Job. 4. νίκησιν νικῶν*, Faith the victory and triumph over the world, using it as a tame conquer'd captive creature, contemning and defying it, and against all our tempters vindicating and maintaining that title of ours, which the blood of Christ help'd to purchase for us, that of superiority & conquest over the world. Not only that of contentment with a little, a tame privative contentment, (which yet the Spaniard thinks fit to make rivall with Jupiter, enough, when 'tis attain'd on earth, to get away all the love and value from heaven) but of preferring the conveniences and advantages of that little, (nay that admirably valuable condition of the nothing at all) the quiet and dignity of being fed immediatly from Gods own hand, of being a speciall part of his solicitude, nay of rejoycing in tribulations, the glorifying and magnifying God in that behalf beyond all others, and so being as in a state of ascendancy still, (a yet more glorious condition) that of being under Gods managery and discipline, a part not only of his retinue, but his skill, a piece of his craft and workmanship, hewed and squared and carved by those keen sharp instruments of his, to become so many *ἡγῶναι αὐτοῦ*, incarnate statues of his divinity; And I beseech you to tell me, is this a formidable condition? is not that of the prosperous Atheist far more formidable? Tell me as men, as Christians, and not only as cattel of the herd, look but upon it with those eyes, that hope one day to behold the face of God, (and he that hath this hope, must purifie himself) and pronounce if there be any thing in the smitten Ephraims fate, beside Ephraims sins, that may discompose, or terrifie a servant of such a master, muchlesse drive us into tempests and rages of feare, with oathes, and curses, and damning of our selves, that we know not that Christ that would lead us, or bring us into this condition; A condition, (look it never so sadly) which (believe me, or believe your Saviour upon his Mount,

Mount, his Pulpit, or but believe your own soules, when ever you come to trie it) shal prove a mine of comfort to you, even in this life, the true fountain, from whence the old *isiduros*, the voluptuous, or pleasurable, drew but drops or lappings, but will yeeld the illuminate Christian full streams of all the reall joy, and Epicurism in the world.

Which as it shall be the summe of my present addresse to you, so of my prayers to God for ever for you, that he that knowes best how to choose for us, will not suffer us to doe it for our selves, wil answer the necessities of our health, and not the importunities of our appetites, that he will take our Souls part against our enemy Flesh, and not our bodies, our estates, our Satans against our soules, will teach us that patience, and that joy, that tranquillity, and that serenity, that courage, and that Anthem of his three Martyr-children, that we may sing also in the midst of flames, denudate us of all, when that may fit us for our prizes, prescribe us any the scorchingst Fornace here, which shal prove most instrumentall to our present Reformation, and future blisse, to our life of obedience here, and of glory hereafter: Which God of his infinitemercy grant us all, for his Son Jesus Christ his sake, to whom with the Father, &c.

K

JOHN



John Baptist's Warning.

The IV. SERMON.

MATTH. 3. 2.

Repent, for the Kingdome of Heaven is at hand.



Wo difficulties there are in these few words; what is meant by the *Kingdome of heaven*, and what by *Repentance*, and then one plain matter of Practicall Divinity that results from the union of them. The difficulties must be explained, or else the Doctrine will not become by: the Earth removed, ere the Oare be sprang; the vail be rent, and then the Oracle will appear.

The former; what is the *importance of the Kingdome of heaven*, as being more disputable, I shall propose more civilly, and tenderly, and unconcernedly, as willing to give an Example of that meeknesse, and that charity, that in matters of Opini-
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on will keep a Christian from noise or quarrell, but the latter being more practically, to which your eternal weal is more closely consequent, (a little mistake in repentance being like the loosning of a pin in a Watch, the actions and Motions of the whole life, even the success of every temporall enterprize or hope depending on it) you must give me leave to be more dogmatically, to asseme confidently, and if need be, contend and quarrell you out of such errors. To begin with the first Difficulty.

The Kingdome of heaven in this place, I conceive to have a peculiar criticall sense, different from what belongs to it in many other places; and to signifie the destruction of the Jews, that remarkable vast *παραστροφή*, or finall subversion of that Church and State, wherein the power, and so kingdome of Christ was most illustriously visible against his persecutors; and if you must have the reasons of my conceit, I will give you a taste of them. 1. The parallel use of the phrase in some other places; Not to trouble you with many. In the 11 *Luke*, where our Saviour having mentioned the beginnings of sorrowes, *ἀρχὴς ὀδύνης*, beginnings of their throwes of travaile, and pro-lusions of this so bloudy day, (*Jerusalem* encompassed with Armies, and the prodigies that should be observable about that time, the signes in the Sun and Moon, &c. *ver. 25.* parallel to the relations in *Hegesippus*, and *Iosephus*, and predictions in *Joel*, *The Sun shall be turn'd into darknesse, and the Moon, &c.*) he then concludes in the words of this Text, *When ye see these things come to passe, know ye, that the Kingdome of God is nigh at hand.*

A second Argument you may take from the Preacher, the Baptist, whose office it was to warn the Jews of this destruction, as you may see, *Mal. 1.* Behold, I will send you *Elijah the Prophet*, i. e. *John Baptist* a prophecyng, before the coming of the great and dreadfull day of the Lord, and he shall turn the hearts of Fathers, &c. directly the Sermon of Repentance, Conversion in my Text, *lest I come and smite the earth*, (*לְמַעַן יָבִיאוּ יְהוָה אֶת-הָאָרֶץ*) i. e. in the Scripture phrase, peculiarly the Lord of *Ju-dea*) with a curse, the cleare interpretation of this Kingdome.

A third Argument you may have from the consequents in this Text, where the Baptist saith it over again to the Pharisees in other words, the μένυμα ἔρχη, the wrath ready to come, and the axe laid to the root of the trees: and so it seems this kingdome was a heavy slaughtering hewing Kingdome.

And so indeed the propriety of the word will bear, (which will serve for a fourth Argument) there being two notions of a Kingdome; the one, as it signifies raining, the other as executing judgment; the first ruling, second coercing or punishing the first the golden scepter, the second the iron rod, that δεικνύει Θεῷ, royall Officer of God, being ἐκδικῶν ἡμᾶς, Rom. 13. an avenger or executioner for punishment; and for the matter in hand the case is most clear, Christ was never so demonstrably a King, as in that royall act of revenge upon his Crucifiers, then was his standard set up, his ensigne displayed, the signe of the Son of man appearing in Heaven, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory, Mat. 24. 30. Once more, there is but one interpretation of this kingdome of Heaven that can pretend against that which we have now given you, and that is, that it should signifie the preaching of the Gospell, which at John Baptists Sermon was not yet present, but ἤρξε, was at hand; but how could that be the thing meant, when Christ himself (who was this King, and his preaching, this kingdome) doth still continue the same stile Mat. 4. 17. Jesus began to preach and say, Repent, for the kingdome of heaven is at hand; the other kingdome was already come in Jesus preaching, but still this kingdome is to come, yet future, though 'twere at hand. Yea, and when the Apostles were sent out a preaching, which sure was the presence of that kingdome, the same stile was still continued by them, Luke 10. v. 9. ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ, the kingdome of God is at hand upon you, and then immediately to give the interpretation of that kingdome, they shake off the dust against them, a direfull ceremony, and it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom then for that City, verse. 12. the destruction that Sodom met with, was more supportable then this.

I will now flatter my self that I have given you some hints
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(and 'tis in kindnesse to my auditory that I doe no more) to acknowledge it not improbable, that the *kingdome of heaven* may have a peculiar separate notion in this and some other few places, from that which it ordinarily signifies, and so denote the fatall finall day to the *Jewes*, and that will give our *Baptist* a preacher of *repentance*, just as *Jonas* and *Noah* were, Gods œconomy the same, and the stile but little changed, *Gen. 6. 3.* [*Repent, for within 120 yeares the world shall be drown'd*] was the summe of *Noah's* Sermon, [*Repent, for within 40 daies Nineveh shall be destroyed*] was *Jonah's* Sermon, and [*Repent, for the Kingdome of God is at hand*] within the compasse of this generation shall *Jerusalem* be destroyed, was the *Baptists*, the *Christs*, the *Apostles* Sermon. And so I have done with my first difficulty.

The second will not detain or importune you so long; what is here meant by *Repent*: 'tis in a word, the amending of our lives, that *μετάνοια ἀπὸ νεκρῶν ἔργων*, *Heb. 6. 1.* *repentance not for, but from dead works*, the giving over the sins of the former life. The *Versicles* before our *Confession* in the front of our *Liturgy* have directed and have authorized this interpretation, *Amend your lives, &c.* and all other Languages agree in this Divinity, *μετάνοια* in Greek, a change of mind, *הסבחה* in Hebrew, returning or conversion, *Resipiscencia* in Latine, a returne to our wits again, and *Reformation* or amendment of lives in English.

Having thus past through the rougher part of your task of patience, seen what is most probably meant by the approaching kingdome of heaven, and what undoubtedly by Repentance, (the first of which hath brought home the Text very neere the present condition of this Kingdome, Blessed Lord that the latter might bring us home Profelytes unto the Text) there is but one syllable left behind to exercise you, and that is the [*For*] betwixt this *Kingdome* and this *Repentance*, and the importance of it comprehends these two things: 1. That Repentance is the only proper use of such direfull denunciations, 'Tis the only designe of Gods threats to extort Repentance from us, the same Baptist that denounces the approach of the bloody slaughtering Kingdome, requires Repentance

of his Auditory; *Repent, for the kingdome of heaven is at hand.*
 2. That Repentance is the only way of averting that that is now at hand, and will otherwise undoubtedly invade them, *Repent, for it is at hand.*

You see the double aspect of the [*μετνοειν*, *Repent*:] one upon the [*βασιλεια*, the *Kingdome*;] the other upon the [*εγγυια*, *it is at hand*:] the double propriety of this grace, first, as the Use of the Doctrine, secondly, as the means to avert the judgment; To answer Gods importunity, and to deprecate his wrath: A duty of justice to him, and of prudence to our selves: An Aphorisme of Divinity and policy too, they will both come seasonably to our wants: we had need to make better use of the inpendency of Gods judgements, then God knowes hitherto we have made, and we had need to find out some stronger Antidote, some more approv'd *αλαξινηιον*, then hitherto we have taken, the Baptists [*For*] will be instrumentall to you for each of them. I begin first with the first, that Repentance is the onely proper use of such direfull denunciations.

And that I must infer thorow these two steps, or degrees:
 1. That no other use is sufficient, but Repentance; and then that no Repentance is sufficient but the *μετανοια*, the change, which is here defined.

1. No other use sufficient but Repentance.

To passe by those so frequent, but abominable uses which are made of these present calamities; In one, a supine stupidity, a constant wretchednesse, an intermitting all the duties of our callings till the times be better, and so making it impossible without a second Miracle, that *Peace* should prove peace, *i. e.* bring prosperity after it; In a second; the relieving his melancholy thoughts with a cup of *Lethe*, a sleeping pill of good-fellowship, calling to the Ocean to drown, when the Hills will not be so kind as to fall upon him: like *Saul*, sending to the Minstrell when the evill spirit came upon him; or like his second addresse, that to the Witch, (for such is the cup wherein he divineth) to charm the judgement that is ready to invade him: In a third, the multiplying of sins as fast as God multiplies judgements, like the Elephants by the bloud of the
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the Mulberies in the *Macchabees*, the more enraged in our *Stomachs*, our fightings against God, by the bloudiness of the spectacle before us, advancing even to profaneness and Atheisme, like the Emperor that in stead of reforming or trembling, would thunder back against *Jupiter*; all which, I cannot compare better then to the effect of the famous plague in *Thucydides*, that saith he, was pestilentiall to their soules as well as bodies, made them *Impudens & ayeus*, swept away civility and humanity as well as men, left nothing but ferity and savagenesse among them; To omit these, (which sure are no sufficient use, none of that *χρησιμότητα*, serving the time, which can be mistaken for *χρησιμότητα*, serving the Lord) many other uses there are, with which Men are willing to content themselves, many inferiour vulgar graces the Devil can allow us to be taught by these calamities, if by that means he may keep us off from this one grand necessary of repentance: when the Whale approaches the Ship, 'tis the Mariners stratagem to throw him out a Barrel or two to sport with, to keep him from that nobler game he came for, the tossing and drowning the Ship. When *Xerxes* was in danger in the tempest, *Herodotus* tells us of his Nobles, *ἡγεμόνες ἐν τῷ πλοῖ*, *οἱ δὲ Σάραπες* they made their obeysance and leapt over-board to save the Princes life: and so when the *Leviathan* in the text, a devouring denunciation makes toward us, that naturally delights in that charitable cruelty the tossing and drowning the sinner-part of the man and state, wounding the Vessel thorow the ribs, ship-wracking the affections, the lusts, the reigning sin, the heathen prince, the Devil in it (that grand important work, that joy of such Angels, or messengers of Heaven, that (to them so delightfull) game of repentance) some lower meaner Vessels we have to cast out to is, some inferior contents to sacrifice, some Nobles to leape over-board, some very vertues and graces we can have our great pilot *Satāns* leave to retribute to these storms, these denunciations, so the body of reigning sin may be kept unshiprack'd, so that fatal worke of repentance may not be required of us.

One or two not unconsiderable graces these times may already have wrought in the most of us; In one man perhaps contempt of the world, having by our present miseries learn'd so much

much of the contemptiblenesse of it, and by the worlds contemning and affronting of us, had provocations to all returns of contumely and revenge on a *villainous world*; and he that upon such unworthy usage, such barbarous reproachfull incensing behaviour, can but hold up a slight quarrel with this petulant enemy, charge it with some unkindnesse, and in that pet break off that strict league of friendship, vow never to love the unkind treacherous false world so well againe, perswades himself he hath made a most excellent sanctified use of these times. I confesse I am glad to see such quarrels, glad that any thing can allay that mad passion, that *λιθομανία*, as *Isidor* calls it, that *fury of love* and doting on our earthen Gods, glad that they that have been so long tormented in their own Gallies, *suo calculo damnati ad metalla*, by their owne tyrannicall covetous minds condemn'd to that old Roman punishment, *a digging and bewing in the Minerals forever*, are by the bounty of these ill times returned from their thraldome, their captivity before their yeare of *Jubilee*, expell'd from these gallies, banish'd out of this inquisition, glad that the worlds forsaking of us can work any degree of cure on our fits of spleen, our hypochondriack passions to the world, 'tis possible that the man thus dispossess'd of his old familiar may at length have hospitable thoughts for some noble guests, that the ill usage from the Harlot may bring the spouse into favour againe, that the sent of the *ill Master* that we have drudg'd under so long, may make us seeke out some more gainfull service, that the unprosperousnes of the arme of flesh, the severall failings of the second causes which we have idolized so often, the many delusions and ill successes we meet with in the World, may make some forsake those Atheisticall colours, and bring in Proselytes to Heaven, and so this contempt of the world may be a piece of proœmiall piety, an usher or Baptist to *repentance*; but till it be thus improv'd and built upon, till this excellent piece of Philosophy be, as *Clement*s saith of the Pagan Schoole, *πληρωμένοι διὰ Κερείου*, baptiz'd by that Baptist, christianiz'd by the addition of *repentance*, till the thorns that are now in the flesh, enter to the pricking and wounding of the heart, to the letting out all worldly trusts, and aery hopes

hopes out of it, till he that is fallen out with this world, and his Egyptian Master there, come with me in the Gospell unto Christ in quest after the blessed heavenly master, running, and kneeling; and asking, *Good master what shall I doe to get my portion in another world?* and pursue Christs directions to the utmost in that designe; that contemner of the word must still know, he hath not yet taken out the Baptists copie, not made such use of the doctrine of the rod, as is expected from him, he is not yet advanced so far as to *Johns baptisme*, to that [*ἐν ὅλῳ χριστιανισμῷ*] *the so much as almost a Christian, which the Baptist could have made him.* O then let him go on to the perfection of the Text, not satisfie himself with that use of it.

In another perhaps the complexion of the times have had a yet nobler influence, inspired him with a perfect valour, an athletick habit of soul, a contempt of life it self, brought him to a dreadlesse approach of that supreme terrour, and that not onely the *martiall man*, whose calling is to *beard that Lyon*, but even the *soft Courtier*, who had inbibed no such bold principles; 'tis now no newes to heare death kindly treated. We can think of death as of a preferment, of the grave as one of the greatest dignities in the Church, and not onely *ισχυρι*, but *υμνησειν*, blesse this enemy, (when we have not so much meeknesse or charity for any other) count them happiest and blessed 'till that come earliest to it, Each discontented *Jonah* hath his [*take I beseech thee my life from me*] the whole Kingdome is become wildernesse, a many prickly Juniper trees scatter'd every where in that wildernesse, and an *Eliab* fate downe under every one of those Juniper trees, [*a sighing out his request for himself, that he may die; It is enough now O Lord, take away my life*] and I see this passeth with some for a speciall piety, and mortification; which, let me tell you, consider'd aright, is an act of the fullenest Atheisme, a felonious intent against themselves, which because (like *Saul*) they are too cowardly to execute with their own hands, God must supply the Armour-bearers place, be call'd in to doe it for them: But I am not so uncharitable to think that all our thoughts of kindnesse to death are the congelations of such black melan-

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choly vapours, 'tis, I hope, in some an obedience to *Plato's* precept, the ~~τὴν αἰσχρονομίαν~~ the endeavouring to behave ones selfe comely in whatever fortune, a Christian submission to Gods will in either of the *δύο νόμοι*, which way soever the æconomy of providence dispose us, even as far as to death it selfe, no hatred or satiety of life, but an indifference to either lot, the hating life onely as we are commanded to hate our Parents, not with an absolute, but comparative hatred, (the denotation of the Hebrew ~~שׂוֹנֵא~~) only chusing the rest, preferring the dormitory, the being asleep in Christ, in paradise with Christ, rather then to be in those uneasy postures, laborious marches that an hill on earth provides for us; and then I shall commend your righteous judgment, but yet still not flatter you, that this is a sufficient use of this Baptists Sermon, of the present impendency of Gods punishments: Thou may'st not only be content, but wish to die, and be with Christ, which is far better, more desirable even to the carnall man, most gladly exchange the torments of a brickle life, for the joyes of an eternity, and yet not have deposited the lusts and basenesses of this nauseated life, the former is but an act of the judicative faculty, a conclusion that such premises once considered cannot chuse but extort from us, but the other is an act of the will; which is not so easily brought to perform its duty, to mortifie the flesh with the affections and lusts, the worke of repentance here required of us: and I beseech you let us not be too confident that we have performed our taske, though we could resolve to be content, nay glad to die with Christ, (for so you know Peter could doe; and deny and blaspheme him after it) unlesse we have that second martyrdom (that *Cyprian*, or somebody in his disguise, hath writ a Booke of) that vitall martyrdom of our exemplary Sainly penitent lives to improve and consummate t'other: and so still we are not got so far as repentance, we require more storms, more thunder-bolts, more rousing tempests, more pressing calamities yet to drive us thither.

A third sort may have arrived to a third and greater degree of proficiency yet in the schoole of judgements, to a resolution and

and practice of patience under Gods hand, how heavy soever it prove, and yet let me tell you, come short of repentance still: for, I beseech you observe, there is a double submission unto God, to his will, and to his wisdom, that to his will reveal'd, as well as secret, reveal'd for the duties, secret for the sufferings of this life; the first in an active, the second in a passive obedience to Heaven. The submitting to Gods will in suffering, what he layes upon us, (the utmost degree of patience that the most of us attaine to, and when we have done that, thinke our selves Champions and Martyrs of the first magnitude) is but a very moderate degree of Christian fortune, that which Christ needed not have ascended to the Crosse to preach unto us, a man must be a kind of mad Atheist to come short of that, for what is it but Atheisme to think it possible to resist his will, and what but madnesse to attempt it? 'Tis that higher Philosophy of submitting to his wisdom, the acknowledging God the best chuser for us, the stripes which he sends far fitter for our turns, then all the boons we pray for; his denying of our demands, the divinest way of granting them, and in a word, the resolving that whatever is, is best, whatsoever he hath done, best to be done, whatsoever permitted, best to be permitted (*אין איך ארואה דעם ראיה מאניסל*, that very fury, and madnesse of earth, and hell, is a piece of Gods economy) whatsoever is revealed to be his will by its coming to passe among us, (though the Actors in that tragedy shall pay dearly for it) yet better and more desireable and eligible for us; then all friends and patron guardians in heaven and earth, yea and our own souls could have contrived and chosen for us; The good Hezekiahs [Good is the word of the Lord which he hath spoken] when it denounced destruction to his whole family, old Nahums *למא נבא* even this for good to the heaviest news that ever came, so oft repeated, that we find him in Elias Levita, surnamed Gamao, even this, the firm adherence to the truth of that Apostolicall aphorisme, that all things tend to good to them that love God, from tribulation through seven degrees to sword or death is self, and the forming all our lives by the plattick virtue of this one Article; This submission, I say, to his wisdom superadded to that other to his will, and that attended with its naturall consequent, a rejoicing in tribulation, is the lesson,

Gods rod must teach us, yea and submission in actions, as well as sufferings, to his precepts, as well as to his decrees, doing cheerfully, as well as patiently enduring his will, or else we are still but punies in Saint Pauls Academy, but triflers in the school of the Crosse of Christ.

Once more, denunciations of Gods wrath may set us a praying oftener then we were wont before, make us assiduous and importunate in that duty; The tempest in Ionah may cast the heathen Mariners upon their knees, crying man every unto his God, and yet for want of the cleane hands to spread forth toward Heaven, of the new soule to exhale and breathe forth those prayers, the liveliest of those flames, like all those, which our earthly fire brings forth, faint and extinguish long before they come to to that region of purity. 'Twas the blind mans divinity, now we know that God heareth not sinners, a principle of blind nature; and Hierocles a Philosopher descants excellently upon it, The sacrifice of such unreform'd fools, is but *μυστὸν τροφὴν*, but a feast for the fire to prey on, their offerings to the Temple *ἱερὸν οὐκ ἐστὶν*, a prize for the sacrilegious to seize on, the wise-man is the only priest, the only friend of God, *μόνος φίλος τοῦ Θεοῦ*, the only man that knows how to pray, offering up himself for a sacrifice, hewing his lower soule into an image, his upper into a temple of his deity. I might shew you some more of these inferiour uses, imperfect sudden motions, that these judgments may have forced from us: and so still like Chymicks in the pursuit of the Philosophers stone, we meet with many handsome experiments by the way, please our selves in our journey, though never attain to our journeyes end: These sad times and this forced study and contemplation of God in his judgments may have cast us upon some considerable Christian virtues, and yet not advanced us within any ken of that great transcendent treasure, to which all the ignis and the sulphur, the fire and the brimstone of his judgements, that vast expence of thunder-bolts, to the emptying of his armoury was design'd. Repentance is a higher pitch then any or all of these, and it is only repentance is the proper use of this sad doctrine, and not all kinds that passe under that title neither, and that must be shewed you in our next stage.

And

And first, the *repentance* we speake of is *not sorrow* whether for *misery*, or for *sin*; For *misery*, that sluice which lets out such rivers of tears, which get away all the custome from *godly sorrow* or *humiliation*. Such *sorrow* as this, is admirably described by God, *Hos. 7. 14.* and call'd *assembling themselves for corne, fasting and praying*, only upon the losse and for the recovering of worldly plenty, and this, it seems, very reconcilable with all the impiety in the world, for it followes [*and they rebell against me.*] Nor bare *sorrow* for *sin* neither, that which some men call *repentance*, and by so doing have fill'd Hell with none but *Penitents*, for I am confident there is not an unhappy creature there which hath not both these parts of *sorrow*, both for his *misery*, and for his *fall*, that betray'd him to it; Had he not, hell where not half so much hell as 'tis, two of the foremost Tormenters would be missing, the sense of the flames, and the gnawing of the worme, the one *extorting the teares*, the other the *gnashing of the teeth*.

Nor secondly, *humiliation* alone, though that were a great rarity to be found among us, for though that might prevaile to avert or deferre secular calamities from a Kingdome, as it did from *Ahab*, (and therefore our *Satan* that *accuses this Nation day and night* before God, will not allow us this *common grace*: After all our sufferings the whole Nation, God knows, is as unhumbl'd as ever) yet will not a bare *humiliation* under Gods rod be accepted for a sufficient return, when *repentance* and *change* is call'd for.

No nor thirdly, the *sudden passionate motions* toward reformation, the shooting up of the seed in the stony ground, many such weak false conceptions there are in the world, and an *experts*, or *speedy abortion*, the common fate of them all, like the Goates in the Philosopher, that give milke when they are stung, but never else: When he slew them, they sought him, and turned them early and enquired after God; Every one of these is but a poor imperfect payment of that great arreare, that Gods terrours and imminent judgements are come, like the *umpires*, in the Gospel, to arrest us for, and if we do not presently make our peace with our adversary, by rendering him that only royall

tribute, the sincere, impartial, uniforme obedience of our whole age to come, and counting the time past of our lives sufficient to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, give our selves up an early and voluntary sacrifice to Christ, first to be slaine before him, then brought forth (like Antinous in Homer, *"Αντινοῦ τὸν ἄνδρα κίτταυ δὲ δίστονον ἄνθρωπον"*, there lies the sin, laid out a spotted Corps, that hath brought all the misery upon us) and then offered up upon his Altars, so many devoted-mortified new creatures that have the addition of fire to that of aire and water in the mixture, the active, vitall, as well as the sighing, weeping penitentiaries, (the imitation of the sacrifices of old, *χρυσὸν αὐγὰς μετὰ θυμῶν*, gold pow'd about the hornes of the sacrifice) not only the Oxe or bestiall part slain, but righteousness and mercy to the poore used as the ceremonies of breaking off our sins, of slaying that sacrifice, (as in the primitive times no Penitent was re-admitted to the Church, without *αἰσχροπύλαι*, or almes-deeds, and for him that was in the Church there was yet no coming to the Sacrament without an Offertory) then still after all this passionate-variety hath Gods message not yet had audience from us; & til God may be heard by us, there is small hope that we shall ever be heard by God; for repentance is not onely the onely use of the denunciation, but withall, the onely preservative or phylactery, the onely way of averting the judgment which is now at hand, my last particular, Repent, for it is at hand.

And here I shall be able but onely to draw you a scheme of what I had design'd you, a rude draught of dead lines, and not venture to importune your patience with a *Σκετσινος*, but onely tell you that I had purposed,

1. To explain to you that mystery of Scripture, the distribution of Gods judgements into reversible and irreversibile.

And 2. to give you the mark or character in Scripture discriminating the one from the other, the reversible under Gods word only, the [Niniveh shall be destroyed] and yet Niniveh repents, and Niniveh is not destroyed: the irreversibile under Gods Oath also, Though these three men were in it, Noah, Daniel, and Job, as I live, saith the Lord, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, &c.

3. The

3. The commonnesse and frequency of the motion, of the *πρόσῳδος*, or proficiency of one of these states into the other, the change that some addition of judgments, and yeares, and sins, and intercalary mercies may make in Gods decrees, their improvement into *irreversible*. Thus it is very possible, that upon the first breaking out of these judgements upon this Land, the beginning of this rousing Sermon, the fate and state of this Kingdome might be a reversible mutable state, like the Soules of Men in *Maximus Tyrinus*, *ἀντιστρέφουσιν ἐν ἐκστάσει*, in a pendulous middle posture; But since the prodigious unkindly working of these medicinall inflictions, as of the bitter water in the triall of jealousy, making the thigh to rot, and the belly to swell, since to all the sins that before we had borrowed from our Neighbours, we have added so many more from the fiends and furies, to the rising and impoverishing, as it were, of Hel it self; since those Armies of high uncleannesse, of lies, of crafts, of multiplied Oathes, a strange discordant grating harmony in the eares of God, of sacrilegious rapines, and profanations, of— (I beseech you save me the pains of confessing them for you) that sin might be exceeding finfull, and destruction exceeding destructive, and (after some intermission of judgments, but none of provocations) since a dove-like embleme of peace hath been hovering over our heads; but not permitted to rest upon us, disclaim'd and driven out of our region, as a Vultur or Screech-owle, the most ominous hated enemy; since the concurrence of all these, I say, 'tis also as possible we may be now improv'd and advanc'd to our full measure.

But then 4th. I should have shew'd you also the indiscernableness (to the eye of man) of the difference of these distant states, till God by his promulgate sentence have made the separation; (we have not such skill in palmestry as to interpret the lines and strokes in Gods hand, which hath been long upon us; nor in symptoms, as to judge whether *ἀνδρῶν ὑπὸ τῆς μάστιγος*, whether it be infallibly mortall or no) and from thence the possibility yet, that it may not be too late for us to returne and live, to set God a copie of repenting; but then

5. Till

5. Till this be done, every minute we breath, we suck our poyson, we run upon all the spears and cannons in the world, nay if God should heare us before we have answered him, if mercy should interpose before repentance, and reformation made us capable of it, that very mercy were to be deprecated as the greatest judgement in the world, a kind of hell of desertion, a [*why should you be smitten any more ?*] a not vouchsafing us the medicinall stripes, a delivering us up to our selves, as to the fatall^l revengefull^l enemies, the most mercilesse, bloudiest executioners; God may spare us in wrath, relieve us in fury, give us a treacherous settlement, a palliate peace, (the saddest presage and forerunner imaginable) and such it is sure to be, if the surface of the flesh be heal'd before the ~~saide~~ *saide* depth of the wound in the heart be search'd and mollified, if God *repent* before we *repent*; and against such mercies we have more reason to pray, then against all the *miseries*, and intestine flames, all the *Tophits*, and Purgatories, and hels, that the fury of Men or Devils can kindle within our coasts: the same motive that made Saint Basil call for his *feaver* again, to wit, if the recovering of his health were the re-flourishing of his pride, may move us to pray for the continuance of this State-feaver, till our impenitent hearts be humbled. I will make you my Confessors, till this Kingdome be really and visibly the better for stripes, I cannot without some regrets, some feares of uncharitableneffe pray absolutely for peace for it. *Lord purge us, Lrrd cleanse us with thy sharp infusions, cure and heale our Souls by these Causticks of thine, and then thou may'st spare that charge, poure in thy wine and thine oyle, in stead of them ; But till then, Domine nolumus indulgentiam hanc, Lord we are affraid of thy indulgence, we are undone if thou be too mercifull, we tremble to think of our condition, if thou should'st give over thy cure too early, if thou should'st teare off our plaisters and our flesh together, restore our flourishing before thou hast humbled and chang'd our souls.*

I have done with my last particular also.

Please you now but to spell these Elements together, the sad threats of a direful Kingdome, the but one word between us, and that; only *Repentance*, to sanctifie it to us, and avert it from us, the Baptist miraculously born to preach it to them, and the same voice now crying in the Wildernesse to this Nation, in the midst of a whole *Africk* of monsters, a desert of wilder men; and if this Raven sent out of the Arke, the place of Gods rest in Heaven, thus long hovering over this Earth of ours (going to and fro, only on this errand to see whether the waters be dried up from off the Earth, whether the deluge of sin be abated,) may not yet be allow'd some rest for the sole of her foot; If at the heels of that, the dove-like Spirit moving once more upon the Waters, may not find one Olive leaf among us to carry back, in token that we are content to hear of Peace, to be friends with God; If having *Moses* and so many *Prophets*, the rod of the one so long on our shoulders, and the thunder of the other in our ears, we cannot yet be brought this day to heare this voice, this *φωνὴ βοῆς*, this clamorous importunate voice, Repent or perish irreversibly, I must then divert with that other Prophet, with an [*O altar, altar, heare the word of the Lord,*] because *Jeroboam's* heart was harder then that, with an [*O Earth, earth, earth,*] with a [*Heare O Heaven, and hearken O Earth,*] flie to the deafeest creatures in the world, because I can have no better auditors. In this case preaching is the most uncharitable thing, apt only to improve our ruine, like breath when it meets with fire, only to increase our flames: there is nothing left tolerably seasonable, but our prayers; that our hearts being the only whole creatures in the Kingdome, may at last be broken also, that by his powerfull, controlling, convincing Spirit, the proud Atheistical spirit that rains among us, may at last be humbled to the dust; that in the ruine of the kingdome of Satan, his pride, his sorceries, his rebellions, may be erected the humble heavenly kingdome of our Christ, that meeknesse, that lowlinesse, that purity, that mercifulnesse, that peaceablenesse, that

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power

power of the Gospel-spirit, that we may be a Nation of Christians first, and then of Saints; that having taken up the cloze of the Angels antheme, *Good will towards men*, we may passe through *peace on Earth*, and ascend to that *Glory to God on high*, and with all that celestiall Quire ascribe to him the Glory, the Honour, the Power, the Praise, &c.

GOD



God is the God of Bethel.

The V. SERMON.

GEN. 31. beg. of v. 13.
I am the God of Bethel.

THe story of Gods appearing to *Jacob* at *Luz*, *Gen. 28.* is so known a passage, so remarkable even to Children by that memorative Topick; the *Ladder and the Angels*, that I shall not need assist your memories, but onely tell you, that that passage at large, that vision and the consequents of it, from the 12 verse of the 28 to the end of the chapter, is the particular foundation of the words of this Text, and the rise which I am obliged to take in the handling of them. That *hard pillow* which the benighted *Jacob* had chosen for himselfe in *Luz*, (and became so memorable to him by the vision afforded him there.) he *anointed*, and *Christned*, as it

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were,

were, named it anew, on that occasion, into Bethel, the house, or residence of God, consecrated it into a Temple, solemniz'd that consecration, endow'd that Temple with a vow and resolution of all the *Minckahs*, and *Nedabah's*, acts of obedience, and free-will-offerings, duty and piety imaginable; and the whole businesse was so pleasurable, and acceptable, to God; Gods appearing to him, and his returns to God; that in the words of my Text, (twenty years after that passage) God puts him in mind of what there pass'd, and desires to be no otherwise acknowledg'd by him, then as he there appeared, and revealed himselfe, *I am the God of Bethel, &c.*

For the clear understanding of which, it will be necessary to recollect the chief remarkable passages that are recorded in that story, and seem to be principally refer'd to here, and then I shall be able to give you the survey, and the full dimensions of Bethel, the adequate importance of this Text.

And the passages are more generally but three.

1. Gods signall promises of mercy and bounty to Jacob, emblematically resembled by the Ladder from Earth to Heaven, God standing on the top of that, and the Angels busie on their attendance, ascending and descending on it; and then in plain words the embleme interpreted, the hieroglyphick explained, *v. 13, 14, 15. I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, &c. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, &c. And behold (there is, the signall promise I told you of, that belongs to every Pilgrim Patriarch, every tofs'd itinerant servant, and favourite of Heaven) that carries the simplicity, and piety of Jacob along with him, though he be for the present, in that other title of his, the poor Syrian ready to perish) behold. I am with thee, and will keepe thee in all places, whither thou goest, and will bring thee againe into this Land, for I will not leave thee untill I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.*

The second passage is, Jacobs consecrating of this place

of Gods appearance, anointing the Pillar, and naming it Bethel, in the 18, & 19. verses.

The third and last is, Jacobs vow unto God on condition of that his blessing him, verse 20. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I goe, and will give me bread to eat, and rayment to put on, so that I come to my Fathers house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone which I have set for a pillar, shall be Gods house, and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

These are the three principall passages in that story, and in relation to each of these, I am now obliged to handle the words, and consequently, to divide them not into parts, but considerations, and so look on them as they stand;

First, In relation to Gods promise, there made, and so 1. God is the God of Bethel.

Secondly, In relation to this dreadfull, this consecrated place, as Bethel signifies the residence, the house of God; and so 2^d. God is the God of Bethel.

Thirdly, In relation to Jacobs vow there made, and so 3^dly, and especially and most eminently, God is the God of Bethel, as it followes in the verse, I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst a pillar, and vowedst a vow unto me.

I begin first with the first of these, The relation of the words words to Gods appearing, and making promise to Jacob, so ego Deus Bethelis, God is the God of Bethel.

And in that first view you will have tender of three severals, I will give you them as they rise.

1. That God takes a great deale of delight in making; and recounting of promises made to his Children; the free omnipotent Donour of all the treasures of the world, is better pleased to behold himselfe our Debtor then our Prince, triumphs more in his punctuall fidelity, then his superabundant mercy toward us; he that loves us passionately, that once put himselfe into a dropping sweat in a meer agony of love, pour'd out his heart-bloud in that

passion, that delights to doe us good, joying more in dispensing favours, and obligations, then any man living in receiving them, doth yet most effectively rejoyce and triumph in seeing himselfe engaged and obliged to us, in being faithfull and just (which relates to his performing his engagements; that which by promise he hath bound himselfe to do, and so becomes his righteousness, and his payment of dues) then in the honour of being unlimitedly free to poure out acts of all mercy and unexpected bounty, matters of absolute choice whether he will doe them or no; In the very story of which this Text is a part, God certainly might have enriched Jacob by what means he pleased, conducted him home to his Country upon that one score of his free mercy, (as well as he may bring his chosen to Heaven meerly by acts of free grace) but you see he chuses to do it on that other stile, as he is the God of Bethel, that ever since the mutuall compact betwixt him and Jacob there, hath stood obliged to this poore Syrian, must deny himselfe, if he be not constant to Jacob: thus Deut. 7.9. *The Lord thy God he is God, and the onely attribute that there he proclaimes him in, is that of the faithfull God; the faithfull, and that farther insisted on, which keepeth Covenant and Mercy; first Covenant, and then Mercy; and so Isa. 49. 7. Because of the Lord that is faithfull: and how many times is this stile repeated in the New Testament, God is faithfull who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able; and, God is faithfull which will not forget your labour of love, &c. is as exact and punctuall in performing Covenants, as strictly accurate in fulfilling of bargains, as the most covetous griping Merchant on earth would require his Chapman to be: And the reason or design of this method of Heaven, the aime of this œconomy is presently discernible also.*

First, to regulate and moderate the expectations and hopes of men, which are apt to be very sanguine, and very precipitious, hoping proportionably to Gods power, i. e. infinitely, unlimitedly, whatsoever our carnall hearts can aspire to, to have sins pardon'd before they are mortified,

riſed, to ſee God without any kind of purifying, Where-
 as this God of Bethel that will be looked upon onely as
 ſuch, muſt be required to do no more then he hath pro-
 miſed to do; our hopes muſt be terminated in his revela-
 tions of his will; not whatever he may do by his infinite
 free power, and grace, but what he in wiſdome hath
 thought good to promiſe, as the Rector of the Univerſe,
 not as an abſolute irreſpective Donour; And that is ſo far
 from a confinement or reſtraint, that it is a mighty en-
 hancement of the mercy. His promiſes being generally
 conditionall promiſes, and ſo exacting all manner of ſin-
 cere honeſt endeavours toward cleaning, reach out to
 us together with the mercy offer'd, an engagement of
 that purity and that ſanctity; which, if it may be wrought
 in our hearts, is far the greater bleſſing of the two, hath
 more of divine and heavenly treaſure in it, then the reſcu-
 ing out of a ſullen Labans clutches, and ſo as 'tis obſer-
 ved of *Pomponius Atticus*, that by lending to the poor,
 and requiring payment againe of the loane at the day ap-
 pointed, he did more good then if he had abſolutely and
 freely given; taught them juſtice, and induſtry, as well
 as reliev'd their wants, (and the two former the far richer
 Donatives) ſo God by this courſe of promiſes, conditionall
 promiſes, conditionall liberality, gives us duty and piety alſo
 into the bargain, all manner of obligations to it; and ſo is a
 thorow-Paraclet, an exhorter and comforter both, puts *Jacob*
 in mind of his vow'd neceſſary obedience, by the menti-
 on of the promiſes made in Bethel: and that is one prime
 aime of this method, of Gods magnifying himſelfe in this re-
 lation.

A ſecond (benefit at leaſt to us; and conſequently)
 aime in God there is, to teach us by this copie, diſcipline
 as by this example, that we take care to allow God our
 proportionable returns, to be as juſt with God, as pun-
 ctually faithfull in all our promiſes to him, as forward
 to put God in mind of what we have obliged our ſelves
 to perform to him, as he by proclaiming himſelfe here
 the God of the promiſes in Bethel, and in ſo many other pla-
 ces

ces the God of Abraham, i. e. that God that made so many promises to Abraham, (in which all the people of the world are concern'd) hath done unto us. This were an admirable lesson from hence to be transcribed into hearts, to have our frequent set (weekly or monthly) audits with God, to tell him freely how much we are in his debt, not onely to recount those desperate arrears, the sins committed for which we come now for pardon, but especially the obligations enter'd, which we might set our selves bodily to perform, most freely and cheerfully commemorating before him, not onely the *θεοὶ μαρτυρίαί, & ἱερὰ νόμοι*, the divine admonitions, and holy laws whisper'd inarticulately in our hearts, which the Heathen *Porphyrie* tells of, the obligations that lie upon us as men and creatures, and must be discharg'd by us, if ever we aspire to the dignity of Christians or Saints, *ἡμεῖς οὖν οὐκ ἀπορνοῦντες ἑαυτ., ὅτι οὐ θεοί, ἀλλ' ἄνθρωποι*, we must approve our selves Men first, and then Christians, live a reasonable, before we are ever capable of the Angelicall life, (first, that which is naturall; and after, that which is spirituall) but also the promises, and engagements of an higher indenture, those of the Christian, either that one standing obligation entred at the font, which must be resolv'd to have a close influence upon every minute of the age after, or moreover all the many penitentiall resolutions, all the occasionall quarrels against sin, the indignations and vow'd revenges on those beautefeux that have so disturb'd our peace with Heaven: Would we but spend our time in this recounting and discharging of promises and obligations, pay God his plain dues of obedience, that which we are most strictly bound to by the law of Christ, and for which our own hands are so many times produceable against us, we should not need much to take up our thoughts with the pride, or confidence of our free-will oblations, the boasts of our charities, and almes towards Heaven; he that would but consider that to be faithfull (as in God towards men, so in man toward God) signifies not so much to believe the promises of others, as to performe our owne, that the Faith by which the just doe live, consists in the paying of our voves to Christ,

Christ, as well as depending on his blood, or promise for salvation, would endeavour to recover Christianity, and Faith to a better reputation in the world, then now ordinarily seems to belong to it, would live more justly, and more Christianly then he doth. And let that serve for the first part of your prospect, the first observable in the first view.

The second thing from this title of Gods, as it refers to his promises of mercy to *Jacob*, made in *Bethel*, and repeated now at his departure from *Laban*, is this, That God would have us consider the blessings we enjoy, and observe particularly *how*, and whence they descend to us. This is the direct end of this vision to *Jacob*, *verse 11, 12. Lift up now thine eyes and see, All the rams, &c.* The thriving of that stratagem of *Jacobs*, the invention of the *peeled rods*, whereby he was grown so rich, *Chap. 30.* in despite of *Laban*'s malice, God will have ponderingly consider'd, and imputed as an act of his special interposition, or providence, partly in justice, that the covetous *Laban* should not too much oppress him, [*I have seen all that Laban doth unto thee*] partly to make good his promise at *Bethel*, made then, and now most particularly perform'd, *I am the God of Bethel*. And believe it, there is not a duty more necessary and yet more negligently perform'd, more fruitfull, and nutritive of piety, and yet more wretchlesly despised, and intermitted then this; this of observing this *Ladder from Heaven to Earth*, of beholding all the good things that we lawfully enjoy, descending in an *Angels hand*, and that fill'd (as the pitcher out of the well, or as *Aarons Sons hands* from his Father at the entering on the high Priests office) from the hand of God standing on the top of the Ladder. He that would thus critically examine his estate upon interrogatories, put every part of it upon the rack, and torture, to confesse without any disguise, from whence it came, whether down the ladder from Heaven, or up out of the deep, (for there it seems by the Poets, *Pluto* or riches hath a residence also) by what means it was convey'd, by whose directions it travail'd into that coast, and what the end of its coming is, and so learn

the genealogy, as it were, of all his wealth, would certainly acknowledge that he were fall'n upon a most profitable enquiry. For beside that he would find out all the ill-gotten treasure, (that Gold of *Itholum* that is so sure to helpe melt all the rest; that which is gotten by sacriledge, by oppression, by extortion, and so take timely advice to purge his lawfull inheritance from such noisome unwholsome acquisitions, and thrive the better forever, after the taking so necessary a purgation) he will, I say, over and above, see the originall of all his wealth, all that is worthy to be called such, either immediately or mediately from God; immediately, without any cooperation of ours, as that which is left us by inheritance from honest Parents, (our fortunes and our Christianity together;) mediately, as that which our lawful labour, our *planting and watering* hath brought down upon us wholly from Gods *εὐπορία*, or *εὐδία*, his prospering or giving of encrease: And when we have once thus discern'd the peculiarity of our tenure, only that of *allodium* not from any *ἀνθρώποις*, but from God, (as the Lawyers have derived that word) all that we have held *in capite* from Heaven: As this will be the sweetning of our wealth to us, give it a flavor or an high tast, whensoever we feed on it, more joy in one wel-gotten morsell (the festival of a good conscience) then all the *πύλαι*, or *μερίδες*, the portions, fetcht from the bloody polluted Heathen idoll Altars ever would afford us, so will it enflame our souls toward so royall a benefactor, teach us piety from our fields and coffers, (as even *Aristotle* can talke of his *εὐρυψα πάθος*, that rich men will love God, if for nothing else, yet because he hath done them good turns; and *Hippocrates*, that though the poor did generally murmur, and complain, yet the wealthy would be offering sacrifice) yea and inspire our whole lives with an active vitall gratitude, by the use of this wealth to demonstrate; and acknowledge, whence we have have received it, by refunding and employing it not on our wayes, our own humours, our own vanities, but as that which God hath convey'd into our hands, as into an Ecclesiastick treasury or *Corban*; a store-house of Gods, whence all his poor family is to be victuall'd; that which

God

God pours out of Heaven into our hands, being as particularly mark'd out for charitable, pious, *i. e.* heavenly uses, as that which by the bounty of men is intrusted to us particularly for those ends, and every rich man as directly and properly a Steward of Gods, to feed his household, when they want it, and as strictly responsible for this Stewardship as ever the *ἀρχιερεῖς & ὑποσπόμενοι* were, the auxiliary Governments, the Deacons in the ancient Church, ordain'd by the Apostles for that charitable Ministry. You remember the *πρωτοδικόν*, the poore mans tything among the Jewes every yeare, and till that was paid in Deut. 26. 12. and given to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherlesse, and the widow, that they may eate within thy gates and be filled, their estates are to be counted profane and unhallowed, no looking for a blessing from Gods holy habitation, *verse 15.* He that sacrifices all to his owne desires, be they in the eye of the world never so blamelesse and justifiable, to his owne belly, his owne back, nay his owne bowels, (as his own good nature, and not Christian charity suggests to him) he that hath not a month *Abid*, a green stalk, a first fruits for Heaven, an effusion of bounty, to consecrate, and blesse all that is kept for his owne necessities, is either very unkind, or very imprudent, either sees not from whence he hath receiv'd, and that is Atheistickall stupidity, or else never thinks of securing his tenure by the payment of his homage, of making so much as acknowledgment to this God, whose providence hath so wholly enrich'd him, the God of this Bethel in the Text, and that is the unthriftiest piece of ingratitude, the wildest and most irrational il-husbandry in the world.

The third and last observable in the first view, in order to the promises of Bethel, is this, that our prayers and humble dependence on God, is the means requir'd to a-
 Equate Gods promises, to bring downe his blessings upon us: In Bethel there were ascending Angels, parallel to which must be those two Ambassadors or Nuntios (*i. e.* Angels) of every honest Christian heart, before any messages from God, any descending Angels are to be
 N 2 expected

expected thence; and as it was then typified there, so God ever loves and appoints to have it still, *I am the God of Bethel*: and therefore whatever we want of either outward or inward accomplishments, secular, or spiritual good successes, prosperities of Kingdoms, or of soules, would we but look critically into our selves, we should goe neer to find imputable to the want in us of one or both these ascending Angels, either that the things we would have, we dare not justify the asking or expecting them from God; because they are such only as we desire to spend on our lusts, and then *we have not because we ask amisse*, or else we are so overhasty in pursuit of them, that we utterly forget the dependence, and waiting upon God, the [*stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.*] If he be not ready with his Auxiliaries on our first call, deliverance shall come in some other way, the Witch must prevent, and supply the *Samuels* place, the first creature that will look a little kindly upon us, shall get away all the applications from Heaven, (as some Countries, whatsoever they chanced to see *first* every morning, they solemnly worship'd all the day after) the most airy appearances of relief from the improbablest coast shall be able to attract our hopes and trusts, and unbottom us utterly from God, as *Socrates* is brought in by the Comedian with his [*à sonbr' ass.*] a making his addresses to the aire, or clouds, when he had turn'd out all other worships out of his heart; the thing that makes a worldling such a piteous creature, such a meteor, in Christ's, such an unstable wave of the Sea, in Saint *James's* stile, toss'd perpetually betwixt ebbs and flotes of hopes (ever without the association of any wind to drive him) while the onely poore patient waiting Christian that hath sent out his good *genius* on his message up the ladder, and waits contentedly and calmly for his returne again, is the onely fixed star in this lower firmament. *his feet stand fast* on the pavement, never so slippery, *he believeth in the Lord.* That *Orpheus* that in his life-time had made his applications to as many Gods as there be dayes in the yere, (and thence per-

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haps it was that Mexico had so many Temples) grew wiser by more observation, and left in his Will *ita testatur*; that there was but one; 'Twere well if we might do so too, profit by his experience, devert our selves of all our aieri poctick dependences betimes, and roll our selves wholly upon God, 'twere the onely probable thriving policy in the world.

I have detained you too long in the first Isle of this Bethel, that which gives you a view of Gods promises there made: I hasten to the second, the *atrium interius*, to consider God in relation to this dreadfull, this consecrated place, as Bethel literally signifies *Beth El*, the house, the Temple of God, and so God hath a peculiarity of respect to that, *I am the God of Bethel*, in the second sense, i.e. the God of Gods house.

And here were a copious theme indeed should we take a view of the materiall Bethel, and in it observe,

1. The voluntary institution and dedication of Temples even before the Law was given to the Jewes (as after it the *Exaltio*, or *feast of dedication*, being of a meer humane originall instituted, (as the *feast of Purim*, and the *fast of the fift and seventh month* in *Zachary*) by the Jewes themselves; 1. *Mac.* 4. and not by Gods immediate appointment; was yet celebrated, and consequently approved by Christ, in the 10. of *John*) and after the Jewish Law was laid asleep, yet the building and setting apart of Synagogues and Oratories, and Upper-rooms, and since *Basilica*, and *Kvetaxai*, (the parallels of the Bethel here) the *Palaces of the great King and Lord*, appropriate to his publick worship, whenever persecution did not drive it thence.

2. The vow'd dedication and payment of Tithes toward the endowing of Bethel, before there was any such thing as Judaisme in the world, which therefore 'twere strange that Gods subsequent command to the Jewes his owne people, should make unlawfull to a Christian, which otherwise had he not commanded it, must have been as commendable now as it was in *Jacob*.

These, I say, with divers others, are the so many branches of this second consideration of these words, of the relation of God to Bethel; But I have not that unkindness to my auditory as to pursue them with such a shole of unseasonable subjects.

There is another Bethel, the flesh of man, wherein God himselfe was pleased to inhabit, *οικουεν*, saith Saint John, to pitch his tent or Tabernacle there, to consecrate it into a very Temple, our bodies are the Temples of that Holy Ghost, by which Christ was so long agoe conceived among us, and thence it is that his eyes and his heart are set so particularly upon this flesh of ours, to cleanse, and to drain, and to spiritualize it, to expostulate with us, whenever we put it to any common profane uses, as if we violated and ravish'd Christ himselfe, and forcibly joyn'd him to an Harlot, and at last, (if it prove capable of such dignity) to array it in all holinesse and glory, to cloth it upon with beauty and with blisse immortall, and so God is the God of this Bethel also.

Beside this, there is yet one more invisible house of God wherein he delights to be enthron'd, and by Gods own confession, Is. 66. more then either in the Temple of his own building, or the Heaven of his own exalting, even the poor contemptible [*this man*] for whom no body else hath any kind looks, *he that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at his word*; this is that lovely dresse that is so ravishing in Gods eyes, that sets out every Cottage into a Temple, the poorest Pezant into the consecrated delight of Christ, the most abject stones in Lux (once anointed with this grace) into an awfull royall Bethel, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price, *τιμιωτατη*. God is content to be at a great deale of charge in the purchase of it, to pardon the absence of a great many other excellencies, which may possibly exalt us above measure, so he may acquire but this one desired beloved meeknesse, in stead of all. Let us but possess our selves of this one jewel, the [*mecke*] in opposition to the proud, the [*quiet*] in opposition

to the tragicall or turbulent, murmuring, impatient, Atheisticall spirit, and the God of Bethel hath a peculiar propriety to us, he that ownes, and defends his Temple, that is the refuge of the very Sanctuary it selfe, and never, but for the pride and insolencies and provocations of his Church, suffers the Philistines to seise on the *Arke* of his glory, will be a refuge and sanctuary to us, the Angels at Bethel shall become thy guardians, the Cherubim-wings thy over-shadowing, untill this tempest, this tyranny be overpast.

I have done with the second view also, as the Bethel here is the dreadfull house of God, though it be not the dread of it, that hath made our stay so short there, but only my desire to hasten to my last, as my principally design'd particular, as Bethel refers to *Jacobs vow* there made, as it follows in the Verse, *where thou vowedst a vow unto me*, and God hath a most particular respect and relation to such vows, and so in the chief though last place, *Ego deus Bethelis, I am the God of Bethel.*

A Vow is a holy resolution; and somewhat more, the matter of both is the same, a piece of holy valour, or courage, entring under Gods colours into a constant defiance of all the temptations and affrightments, invitations and terrors in nature: Only the bare resolution hath not the formality of a vow in it, is not made so immediately and directly to God, with such a particular invocation of him, as is required to the formality of a vow. Yet will not this difference be so great, but that in all reason the good resolution ought to be allow'd tittle of pretention to Gods owning, (as he is the God of Bethel) as well as the vow, i.e. the materiall, as well as the formall vow; God is a God of all such of either kind. I shall consider them undistinctly; whether resolutions, or vows, they are of two sorts either the generall necessary vow, or resolution, that God shall be our God, as in the 21. v. of that 28 Chap. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, &c. then shall the Lord be my God; a vow'd resolution of universall obedience unto God; or whether the mat-

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ter of it be particularly qualified and restrain'd to free-will offerings, things that he was not otherwise bound absolutely to have done, but yet were very fit matter of resolution and vow, especially in such case as this, *If God will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and rayment to put on, so that I come againe to my Fathers house in peace, then this stone shall be Gods house, and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give a tenth to thee, a free-will-liberality this, the businesse of this Vow.*

We shall look upon these two separately, and 1. on the former kind of them, and shew you how *God is the God of* such, the neer respect and close relation he beareth to them, and that most eminently exprest in three particulars: 1. In *approving* and applauding the making of them. 2. In *prospering* them when they are made. 3. In *looking* after them as his own property and goods, most severely requiring the *payment*, the *performance* of them.

For the first sort then, the *generall necessary resolution or vow*, that *God shall be our God*, the solemn ceremonious entring our selves into his family, the giving up our eares to this new Master to be *open'd*, in the Psalmists, *bored*, in *Moses* phrase, to part with the benefit of all Sabbaticall years or Jubilees, to disclaim all desire of manumission, and to become his vow'd servants forever, this is that great *duty of repentance*, or *conversion*, or *new birth*, that is the summe of all Christianity, that spirituall Proselytisme, to which the *Jew* was wont to be wash'd, as the Christian is *baptized*, and both to take upon them new names, new kindreds and relations, as if they had *entred into the mothers wombs againe*, and come out in new families, new countries, *born neither of bloud, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, i. e. none of the principles of this world*, *ἐκ γένεως καὶ ἐκ σαρκὸς καὶ ἐκ νόμου*, the naturall, the carnall, nay nor the morall, vertuous philosophical elements, but of *God*, of a supernaturall heavenly origination.

In a word, the cordiall renouncing of all the impure scandalous doubtful wayes, that either our selves, or any of the vicious company about us, (the Lacedemonian servants that

that God hath permitted to be drunk and bestiall before us, to practise all villanies in our presence, that we might detest, and abominate them the more) have at any time formerly been guilty of: such was *Jobs* covenant with the eye, that that shall not run its riotous courses over the beauties, or wealth of others: such the Covenant with the tongue, to break it of its customary oathes and loose language.

It were infinite to number up the severall branches of these necessary resolutions; That *this God of Bethel* is the God of such, is the thing that we are oblig'd to demonstrate. And 1. in respect of Gods approbation of such resolutions as these, There is no such snare, or artifice of taking, and obliging God to us, as our dedicating and consecrating our selves to God; If *Solomon* consecrate a Temple to God, God binds himselfe to be present there, to hear, and hearken, and answer what prayers and supplications soever any sinner shall make toward that Temple: And sure the same priviledge belongs to the animate, as well as dead Temple, to the Temple of flesh as well as of stone, to the anointed pillar at Luz, when that turnes Bethel, I mean to the stony heart of man, when by the unction of the Spirit that is mollified and fitted and squared, vow'd, and consecrated into an habitation for God, when out of these stones a child of *Abraham*, the faithfull resolved new creature is raised up; No such good newes to Heaven as this, not onely approbation but joy in Heaven over one such convert Prodigall; the musicke that *Pythagoras* talks of in the Orbes, was that of the Minstrels which our Saviour mentions at the return of that Prodigall, to solemnize the *Enges*, the passionate welcomes of Heaven pow'd out on Penitents.

And if you please, I can doe more then the *Pythagorean* would pretend to, make you auditors of one of those aires; No sooner doth the poor penitent votary begin to God in the Psalmists note, [*Then said I, Lo I come to doe thy will O my God*] (and let me tell you, could you heare those words in the language that *David* sang them, there were without a figure, rythm and harmony, numbers, and

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Musick in them) but you may presently heare God himselfe answering in the *Quoitaine*, or counterpartts ecchoing back a *Venite*, one in *Is.* Ho! every one that thirsteth, come, another in the Gospel, Christ taking up his part in the concord, *Come unto me all ye*, yea and to make up the anthem compleat, the third Person comes in also, *Revel.* 1. 17, the *Bride saith, come*, and after that, all the inferior Orbs are call'd in to bear their part in the Chorus, the *Bride saith, Come, and let him that heareth say, Come*, and let him that is a thirst come, and *Quicumque vult* is the title of Hymne that they all joine in, *whoever will thus come*, (let him be sure of the hospitable reception) *Let him take the water of life freely*. One signall evidence we have of Gods speciall approbation of such Vowes, in *Abrahams* circumcising himselfe and posterity; that you know was the solemnity of his coming to God, The ceremony of his profelytisme, the sacrament and seale of his resolute vow'd obedience unto God, of his renouncing that *αβυσσος* *ιδωλολατρεία*, those abominable Gentile impurities, the *μεγαλα κτήνη*, the unnaturall excrescencies of lust, which the rest of his idolatrous Country-men had long been guilty of, and which brought that fire and brimstone from heaven before his eyes upon some of them. *Abraham* it seems resolv'd and vow'd against those heathen abominations, covenanted with God a life of purity, and to that end a going out of that polluted Country, then seal'd this Covenant to God, (as the custome of the Eastern Nations was in leagues and bargains) seal'd it with blood; and see what an obligation this proves to God, not onely to call him, and account him a friend of God, to stile himselfe by him, as he doth here by Bethel, *I am the God of Abraham*, thorow the whole Book of God, but the obligation goes higher upon God, it prevails so far that he comes downe himself and assumes flesh on purpose to seale back the counterpart of that indenture to *Abraham*, in blood also, and in that, that *he is his shield*, and an exceeding great reward to all that shall but resemble him to the end of the world, in that faithfull coming, that vow'd resolution of obedience to his commands. The short of it is, the resolutions

tions and vows if they be sincere, not the light transient gleame, the sighes onely that we are so ill, or wishes that we were better, but the *voluntas firma & rata*, the ratified radicated firme purpose of new life, even before it grew to that perfection as to bring forth the *verba æstus*, the worthy, meet, proportionable fruits of such change; are instantly accepted and rewarded by God; with pardon of sin; and justification, and so *God is the God of Bethel*, hath a particular respect to these vowes and resolutions at the very making of them, and that was the first thing.

And so again 2^{ly}, for the prospering them when they are made; He that gives himselfe up to God, becomes by that act his Pupill, his Client, part of his charge and Family, an Orphan laid at his gates, that he is bound to provide for, engaged by that application (if once accepted) to be his patron-gardian, as among the *Romans* he that answers to the *neglexu æssu*, to the Clients calling him Father, is supposed to adopt, undertakes the protection of the *Hæredipeta*, obliges himself to the office, and reall duty of a Father. And I remember the story of the *Campanians* that could not get any aide from the *Romans* against a puissant Enemy; they solemnly came and deliver'd themselves up into the *Romans* hands, by way of surrender, that by that policy they might oblige the *Romans* to defend them, and espouse their cause, with a *si nostra tueri non vultis at vestra defendetis*, if you will not lend us your help, preserve our region, yet now we are your own; you are obliged to do it, *quicquid passuri sumus, dedimus vestri patiemur*, whatsoever from henceforth we suffer, it will be suffer'd by your Clients and Subjects: and so certainly the resigning our selves up into Gods hands, the penitent sober resolution of [The Lord shall be my Lord,] giving our selves up not as Confederates, but Subjects, to be ruled as well as to be aided by him; no such way in be world as that to engage Gods protecting and prospering hand, to extort his care and watchfulnesse over us. He that comes out but resolutely into the field to fight Gods battailes against the

common Enemy, God and the Angels of Heaven are ready to furnish, and fortifie that man; Resolution it self, courage but upon its owne score, is able to break through most difficulties, and the want of that is the betraying of most soules that come into Satans power; but then over and above, the prospering influence of Heaven, that is still ready to assist such Champions, the *κρυφα χερ*, which the LXXII. puts in into the last vers. of the 17 of *Exod.* the secret invisible hand, by which God will assist the cordiall *Joshua*, and have warre against *Amaleck* forever, fight with him, as long as *Joshua* fights; the cooperation of the spirit of God with all that set resolutely about such enterprizes of valour, his *συνεργ* to our *ἐργ*, this is a sure fountain of relief and assistance to such resolutions. Do but trie God, and your own souls in this particular for the vanquishing of any sin that your nature and temper is most inclin'd to. Take but the method of this Text, Come into Gods presence, resolve sadly and advisedly in that *Bethel*, never to yeild to to that sin again; resolve not onely on the end, but the means also that are proper to lead thither, foresee, and vow the same resistance to the pleasant bait that to the barbed hook under it, to the fair temptation that to the horrd sin it self; and then those weapons that may be usefull for the resistance, the fasting and the watching (that are proper to the exorcizing that kind of devill) be sure to carry out into the field with thee; and in every motion of the battail let the *Moses* as well as the *Joshua's* hands be held up, the sword of the Lord with that of *Gideon*, implore and importune that help of Gods, which hath given thee to will to resolve, that he will continue his interposition, and give thee to doe also, that *having begun the good worke in thee, he will not lose the pledge, but go on also to perfect it*; and when ever thou art next tempted to that sin, recall and remember this resolution of thine, bid that very remembrance of thine stand by on thy guard, and, if you please, by that token that this day I advised you to doe so; and withall consider the temptation, that it is an *expresse* come just from Satan, that
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sworn enemy of soules, against which in Gods presence the first time thou ever cam'st into the Church, thou didst thus vow and professe open defiance, and hostility, that this disguised fiend shakes a chain in Hell, be his addresse to thee never so formall, and is now come on purpose to supplant or surprize thy constancy, to see whether thou considerest thy reputation with God or no, whether thou makest scruple of breaking vowes and resolutions; and then in stead of *treating* with that sin, cry out to God to defend thee against it, either to give strength, or remove the temptation, and deale honestly and sincerely with thine owne soul, betray not those helps that God thus gives thee in this exigence, and then come and tell me how it hath prov'd with thee. In the mean, till thou hast made this experiment, be not too querulous of thine own weaknesse, or the irresistiblenesse of sin; Believe it, a few such sober trials and practisings upon anger, lust, and the like, and the benefit that would infallibly redound from thence, might bring the ancient Church order of Episcopall Confirmation into fashion and credit again; which had it but its due ingredients and advantages restored to it, (every single Christian come to years of knowledge, and temptations, in the presence of God, and Angels, and fellow Christians, repeating that vow in his own name, which was made by his Proxies at the Font, and the blessings of Heaven powerfully called down by those who have a title to the promise of being thus heard) as it would by the way fully satisfy all the pretensions and arguments of the Anabaptist, so would it also be a more probable effectuall restraint for sin, then those, which have so solemnly decryd, or but formally practis'd that institutiō, have taken care to afford us in its stead.

But then thirdly, God is a God of resolutions, to *exact performance* of them; the pauling Trifler in this kind hath all the vengeance of *the God of Bethel* belonging to him, all that pertaines to the sacrilegious profaner of that Temple which himself had consecrated, the censure and reward not only of the impious, but the fools, Eccles. 5. 4. *When thou vowest, defer not to pay, God hath no pleasure in fools,* and Prov. 20. 25. *It is a snare*

*snare to a man to devour that which is holy, to profane that heart, which is once consecrated to God, and after vower to make enquiry. To doubt of the performing, to falter in the execution of what is thus solemnly resolv'd in Gods service, is the fetching the sacrifice from the Altar, and is sure to bring the coale of fire along with it, the perfectest treachery to a soule, that any sacrilegious enterprize can designe it. And yet God knows how many such fools there be in the world, that solemnly resolve themselves to his service, come to the Font to make, to the Table of the Lord to repeat these vows, and all their lives after do but busie themselves to wipe off the water of one, vomit up, disgorge the other, bequeath themselves to Heaven in the presence of Angels, and then repent of the fact, and labour all their lives long to retrieve and recover themselves backe againe; and the Apostle hath given those men their doome: *It had been sure better for them not to have knowne the way of righteousness, never to have raised an expectation in Heaven, that they meant any kindnesse to it, then thus to cheapen it, and not come to the price of a little perseverance, and constancy to go thorow the purchase; had they never undertaken Gods businessse, never put in for the title of friends and votaries, with a Lord! I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*, they had not been perjur'd, though they had been profane, but now the affront is superadded to the crime, the contumely to the impiety, and all the spirituall desertion, with-holding, and with-drawing of grace, and consequently the ἀδύνατον ἀναστρέφειν, the impossibility for such to renew or recover themselves, without some prodigy of new bounty from Heaven (which provokers have little grounds to expect) is directly become their portion.*

I have dwelt too long on the portal to Bethel, the generall necessary resolutions, or vower that are precursory to those other particularly qualified; I must in the last place be so just to the Text and authority, as to reserve a few minutes for those vower of building and endowing a House for God, which was but a free-will-offering in

Jacob,

Jacob, design'd by him as a returne of acknowledgment for Gods care over him, if he shall bring him again to his *Fathers house in peace*; and so God hath a peculiar respect to such vowes beyond all others, and in that relation, in the last place, *Ego deus Bethelis, I am the God of Bethel.*

He that hath a long and a doubtfull journey before him, a voyage of uncertainty and danger, and considers how little he hath of his owne to contribute toward his convoy, how nothing but the benigne gale from Heaven to waite him safely thither, (and such certainly is the condition of some of us here at this time) may well be allowed to call in and consult at *Bethel*, take directions from old *Jacob* here, how to set out and begin his journey; and that is with vowing a vow unto the Lord. This, I confesse, was the main of my errand, which hath beene thus prepar'd for, and prefac'd unto you all this while; And there it not a more prudent at once and Christian course, that hath more of piety and stratagem in it; nor a more agreeable seasonable proper use of the present distresse, and an engagement on God to deliver us out of it, then thus to take our selves now in the pliable season, and indene some acts of voluntary piety with Heaven most certainly and solemnly to be paid him hereafter, whenever God shall so be with us, as to return us home in peace, to restore us those halcyon dayes after which we are all so impatiently gasping; I say not with *Jacob* literally to build Houses for God, material *Bethels*; (To designe such stately structures, in an age of destroying, were but a Romance-project for any of us, nay blessed be God, we need not a *Solomon* to erect, or *Zorobabel* to restore, a prop to preserve from falling, will yet serve the turne) but from this blessed copie every emulous though weake hand to transcribe somewhat at the distance and in proportion to strength, One to undertake the building one roome of such an house, a private *negotium* or oratory for God: I meane to vow unto God the so many dayly close retirements, by confession of sins and
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deliverances, to acknowledge in prostration of soul if not of body also to bear it company) the provocations that have whet Gods glittering sword against us (every man the plague of his own heart, the *ἡμῶν ἁμαρτία*, in the stile of the antient Liturgies, *my fault, my exceeding great fault*) and the fatherly goodnesse that shall have sheathed it again; and never to give over those constant returns of devotion (with *Daniel*, three; nay) with *David*, seven times a day, to keep some poor kind of proportion with such a deliverance. Another to vow the building a porch of such an house when God shall furnish him with materials where the poor may have but a dining place sometimes; I meane not the loose formall scattering of the crumbs of the table amongst them, but sequestering a set, and that a liberall part of all the revenue that God shall ever bestow, or now rescue out of the devourers hand, and provide or preserve for us, that God in his poor members may have a first fruits, a twentieth, a tenth, a fift of all; Every man out of the good treasure of his heart, not in obedience to any pre-script *quotum*, (I shall be sorry to wrong any man so much, as so to change it from being his perfect free-will-offering) but as out of a heart attracted by Heaven, a liberall cheerfull heaven-like effusion, the constancy and equability of which, yea and the performing it upon vow, or promise, will yet be no blemish to it, or make it lesse like that of heaven, of divinity it selfe. But among all the Epitome's of this *Bethel*, the *domicilia*, little (tents rather then) houses of God, which we are thus to consecrate and vow unto him, here was one at *Bethel*, that would never be wanting, never left out in our thriving'st, sparing'st vows, I mean that pure crySTALL brest of *Jacobs*, that God so delighted to dwell in, (as he was by the Poet supposed to doe in poor *Pyramus's* cottage) that *plain*, honest, well-natured, undisguised heart both toward men and God, Emble-matically exprest'd by those smooth hands of *Jacob*, the fair open *Campania* of even, clear, unintricated designes, far from the Groves and *Meanders*, the dark depths, the entrigo's, the

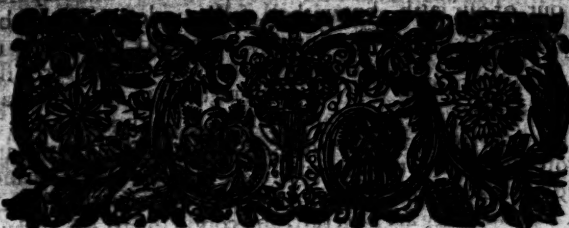
the deventies and subtilties, and falsnesses of the Merchant-worldling. Might but this judgment that hath prey'd and gnaw'd so long upon the bowels of the Kingdome, but pair the heart of the Englishman into such a plain equable figure, leave never an angle or involution in it, make us but those direct-dealing honest fools that we are reproach'd to be, (but God knows are not guilty of that gracious *Jacob*-like quality) might it but have that benign influence upon us here present, might it returne us home with this one vow in every of our mouths, and hearts, to be for the rest of our lives, the English *Nathaniels*, the true *Israelites*, in whom there is no guile; might but this last minute of my hour, make this one impression, (I shal not hope on arude multitude, but, I say) on my present auditory, to be content to live and die with downright honest *Jacob*, thrive or perish on clear direct *Israelitish* principles (which will, I doubt not, one day have the turne of thriving in this world, when every thing else hath the reproach of imprudent and improsporous, as well as unchristian, the Dove advanced; when the Serpent is a licking the dust) and with *Drusus* in *Particulus* in stead of the Artificer that would provide for the deep privacy (that *sevi animi indicium*, in the Orator) send for him that could designe the *diaphanous* house, wherein there might be all evidence every man thought fit to behold that without an optick, or perspective, which will never be disguis'd or conceal'd from the eye of Heaven; might we by the help of a fast Vow now stricken, and with the blessing of God practis'd every hour of our lives after, come home to our Fathers house, old honest *Jacob's* plaine Tent with peace and simplicity, cleanness, uncompoundedness of spirit, (a quality that would be able to commend and improve, christianize and blesse that peace to us, and make it like that of God, a true and durable one) I should then with all chearfulness dismiss you with old *Jacob*, into the hands of this God of Bethel, the God of *Abraham*, and of *Isaak*, and of *Jacob*, that own'd and blessed the simplicity, and fidelity, the plainness, and the trust-

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ness of those three Patriarchs, before all the glorious
 wisdom and politicks of the world; Whose liberality,
 and whose reward, whose uprightness, and incorp-
 tion, integrity and crown, God of his infinite mercy grant
 us all, To whom with the Son, &c.

THE



THE
Necessity of the Christians Cleansing.

The VI. SERMON.

2 COR. 7. 1.

Having therefore these promises (dearly Beloved) let us cleanse our selves.

THere is not, I conceive, any piece of divinity more unluckily mistaken, more inconveniently corrupted and debauch'd by the passions and lusts of men, made more instrumentall to their foulest purposes, then that of the promises of Christ, whether by giving them the inclosure and monopoly of our faith, (the commands of Christ, and the threats of Christ, which have as much right to be believed as they, his Kingly and prophetick office to which he was as particularly anointed as

to that of our Priest, being for the most part set aside as unnecessary, and by many steps and degrees at last not onely left quite out of our faith, but withall, fall'n under our thins, become matter of quarrel against any that shall endeavour to obtrude them not onely so impertinently, but so dangerously, either on our Gospel, or on our Practice) or whether again by perswading our selves and others, that the promises of Christ are particular and absolute, confined to some few, and to those howsoever they be qualified; when the whole harmony and contexture of Christian doctrine proclaims directly the contrary, that they are generall, and conditionall, a picture that looks every man in the face that comes into the room, but cannot be imagined to eye any man else, unrestrain'd to all, so they shall perform the condition; and an [*εὐαγγέλιον κλεισμένον*] those diffusive store-houses seal'd up against all who doe not performe it.

Shall we therefore have the patience, and the justice, and the piety a while to resist these strong prejudices, to rescue this sacred theme from such misprisions, to set up the promises of Christ in such a posture as may have the safest and kindest influence, the benignest and most auspicious aspect upon our lives not to swell and puffe up our phancies any longer with an opinion that we are the speciall Favourites to whom those promises are unconditionally consign'd, but to engage and oblige our souls to that universall cleansing, that may really enstate us in those promises, either of deliverance here, or salvation eternally, that may like the Angel to Saint Peter in Prison, even to God himselfe, shake off those gyves and manacles which have even encombred his omnipotence, made it impossible for him to make good his promises, temporall or spirituall, to such unclean uncapables as we. To this purpose there is one short word in the Text which hath a mighty importance in it, the [*ταῦτα*] the [*these*] annext to the promises: what's the Interpretation of that, you must enquire of the close of the former chapter, and that will tell you, that upon coming out from the pollutions, and villanies of an impure profane heathen world (and such is our unregenerate estate, I would I could not say, such is the condition of many of us that

that most depend on Gods promises) on our going out of this tainted region, our strict separation from all the provoking sins of it, all the mercies of Heaven, and (which some have a greater gust and appetite to) of earth also, are become our portion, a most liberall hospitable reception, *I will receive you, and I will be a Father to all such proselyte guests, and you shall be my Sons and Daughters*, saith the Lord Almighty, as if his Almightyness which is here pawn'd for the discharge of these promises, could not bring them down upon us, unlesse by this coming out of Sodom (to which this Angelicall exhortation was sent to rouse us), we should render our selves capable of them.

In a word, the promises here, as all other in the Gospel, are not absolute, but conditionall promises, on condition of cleansing from all impurity, and not otherwise; and if there be in the whole world an engagement to cleansing, an obligation to the practice of the most defamed purity, that a prophane Age can scoff or rayle at; this certainly may be allow'd to passe for it. *Having therefore, &c.*

The words are an exhortation to cleansing, and in them you may please to observe these three particulars:

1. The ground.

2. The addresse.

3. The exhortation it self.

The ground the fittest in the world for this turne when you shall consider it throughly, *these promises*.

The addresse, adding somewhat of sweetness to that of rationall advice, [*Having these promises, dearly beloved.*]

And, the Exhortation it self, in the remainder of the words, at large in the whole verse. We shall content our selves with the contraction of it, *let us cleanse our selves*.

I begin 1. with the first, The ground, or foundation of the Apostles exhortatory to cleansing, *these promises*.

1. Promises.

2^d. and particularly, conditionall promises.

And:

And yet ² more particularly, the *condemning promises* of this *Text*, the *Love Promises*, as they are set down in the end of the former Chapter, are the most competent, most engaging, effectual arguments or impellents to set any Christian upon the works of Christian practice, than especially of impartial universall *condemning*.

It will be best demonstrated if we take them a sinder, and view them in the severall gradations.

1. *Promises* are a very competent argument to that purpose, a baite to the most generous passion about us, our emulation or ambition; drawing us with the cords of a man, the most rational masculine affectives, I shall adde, (to an ingenuous Christian man, as that signifies neither Saint in Heaven, nor Beast on Earth, but that middle imperfect state of a Christian here) the most agreeable proper argument imaginable to set us a *condemning*.

Two other arguments there are, both very considerable, I confesse.

1. *The Love* (in the Moralist of vertue; but in the Christian) of God himself, and that love if it be gotten into our hearts, will be very effectually toward this end, the *love of God constrains us*, saith the Apostle.

2. *The Feare* of those threats, those formidable denuntiati-
ons which the Gospel thunders out against all unmortified carnall men, that horrid representation of our even Christians God, as he is still under the Gospel (to all unrepent'd, obdurate sinners) a *consuming fire*, and consequently, what a dreadful thing it is to fall into the hands of that living God; and knowing these terrors of the Lord we persuade men, saith the same Apostle; There is some rousing oratory, some awakening rhetoric and eloquence in this also; And let me tell you, though it be but by the way, that I am not altogether of their opinion, that think these terrours of the Lord are not fit arguments to work on regenerate men, that fear is too slavish a thing to remain in a Child of light, a Christian; I confesse my self sufficiently perswaded, that our Apostle made choice of no arguments, but such as were fit to be made use of by Christians, and those terrours are more then once his chosen arguments, even to those that had received the kingdom that can-

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not be moved, Heb. 12. 28. and are exhorted, *seev* from to have
 grace to make use of that precious talent received (which
 supposes a gracious person) or possibly *seev* to be thank-
 full to this magnificent Donour for this inestimable gift, yet
 and this duty raised to the highest pitch that a Christian is ca-
 pable of, to serve God *in awe*, whether that refer to the per-
 sons, and signifie, *seeing with all cheerfulness and alacrity*
 and well-pleasedness, or to God as we render it, *seeing him ac-*
ceptibly with reverence and godly feare, you have still in that A-
 pottle these terrours immediatly annext, to enforce this duty,
 for *our God is a consuming fire*. And so again you cannot but re-
 member the advise of *working*, and *working out* salvation, and
 emphatically, *our own salvation, with feare and trembling*, not only
 with love and faith, but peculiarly, *feare and trembling*, this
 trembling fit enough to accompany the Saint to heaven gates,
 to salvation it selfe and therefore the *salvages, without feare*, in
 the 1. of Luke, which we ordinarily joyn'd with the *salvages* as if
 we were thereby obliged to *serve him without feare*, is in antient
 Copies and Editions joyn'd with the *salvages*, that *we being de-*
livered without feare, (i. e. without danger) might *serve him in*
holiness, &c. And so I think tis a little clear that this *feare*
 which is so cast out by perfect love, that as the Apostle saith 1 John
 4. 17. *there is no feare in love*, is not the feare (b) Gods wrath,
 but of temporall dangers and persecutions. For so
 that *live to Christ*, if it be perfect, such as Christ was
 to us, Chap. 3. 16. (and is referred to again, Chap. 4. 17.
that as he is, so we should be in this world) will make us con-
 tent to adventure any thing for the beloved, even death it selfe
 the most hugely and formidable (as tis there, *we lay downe as*
to lay downe our lives for Christ) but sure not the displeasing
 of God, and torments of Hell, that were too prodigall an
 almes, too wild a *Romany* valour, would have too much of
 the modern point of honour, for Saint John to prescribe, and
 so certainly is but mis-applied to this business, and so still
 I cannot but think it wilde and sober play in him that
 said, *He would not leave his part in Hell* (the benefit which he
 had from these terrours) for all the goods of this world,
 knowing how usefull the flesh of the Viper was to cure his
 poison.

poisonous theriacs to check the temptations; the apprehension of the Calenture that attended; to refrain from the pleasant, but forbidden fruits, that were alwayes a solliciting his senses; and the three ran about the City (that Nebuchadnezzar tells us of) with the brand of fire in one hand, and bottle of water in the other; and said, *Her businessse was to see heaven on fire with the one, and quench hell flames with the other, that there might be neither of them left, onely pure love to God to move or incite her piety*, had certainly a little of the *status* thus to drive her, her spleen was somewhat swolne, or distemper'd, or if one may gueesse by her appearing in the street, she was a little too wild and aeriall in her piety. But this by the way, as a concession, that there is (not onely love, but) feare also that may set men a cleansing, as well as the *promises* in the Text; the denuntiation of punishments is as considerable an act of Christs Kingly office, whereby he is to rule in our hearts by faith, as that of *proposing rewards*; that other act of regality, Rom. 13. And the truth is, all's little enough to impress the duty; and happy is he that hath this threefold cord, this threefold obligation *paternall*, and both kinds of *regall*, each actually in force upon his soule, and eternally happy if either or all may effectually perform the work on him.

But then still, if we observe distinguishingly, and exactly apply, and proportion the arguments to the imperfect Christian state, you shall find that *promises* are the most proper, congruous, agreeable argument, most apt and hopefull to doe the deed, to have the impression upon the heart.

Fear is an argument, but to an ingenuous nature not altogether so appropriate.

Hope, the relative to *promises*, is more *generous*, then that, more noble, more worthy of the Christians brest, a person of so royal an extraction.

On the other side the *love* of God, (for his own sake) *love* of his attributes and excellencies, that admirable, dazling, amazing beauty of his divine essence, O 'tis a warming grace, infinitely melting, and ravishing to those that have their hearts truly possess'd with it.

But

But, is not this again a little above the proportion of the imperfect, inchoate, very moderate state of the Christian in this life? Is it not a little more proportionable to that of the future vision? The Christian, you know, here is made up of two Contraries, the *flesh*, and *spirit*, *in consuetudine*, combin'd and yok'd together, and as the *fear* may be too *d. generous* for the spirit, so the *love* of so transcendent a spiritall object, will be far too elevated and *generous* for the flesh, 'tis not capable of so pure, Angelicall a guest.

This of *hope* is of a middle temper, and so a little more congruous and apportion'd to the middle state, more ingenuous then *fear*, and not so elevated as *love*; Let Hell be set open wide upon us on one side, and it is apt to swallow us up with *horror* and *despaire*, and so that *fear* may miscarry and ruine us. Let the transcendent Excellencies of God be let loose on us on the other side, and they swallow us up againe in extasie and amazement. When our Saviour comes into *Peters* Ship, clothed but with one ray of this infinite beauty (the gracious miracle of the fish) poor creature, he falls downe at *J. I. I.* feet; with a [*depart from me, for I am a sinfull man:*] and the Text gives the reason, for he was astonished at such a presence of his; And you know what *Moses* thought of seeing Gods face, *ut videam & vivam*: he should be never able to out-live it. And as the beholding and the presence, so the high pitch of *love* let in by that beholding, fasten'd on the divine lustre; 'tis most-what too high for our earthly state, even for the regenerate Christian in this life. The beholding him in the reflexion, and the dark beholding, is that which in the Apostles judgement is the richest portion we can aspire to in this life; and that is the beholding him in his graces and in his promises, as *hope* is but a glimpse of *vision*, and thus we cheerfully, and with delight to our very flesh, expect that *glory which shall be reveal'd*; not which is revealed already, or if it were, would burn up, and calcine this flesh of ours, turn the *naturall* into a *spirituall* body, could not consist with such temper'd or constituted Tabernacles, as now we carry about with us. And let that serve for the clearing the first step in the gradation, that *Pro-*

misses

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promises are a fit and proper argument to worke upon our present state, to set us a purifying.

And, ſo that this might be our use of promises! no flattering our selves into Hell with a claime of Heaven, but as a craine or engine to raise us from the depth, fetch us from the lees of sin, and like the Sun-beams on this earth of ours, to attract and force us up toward its region of purity, that as the *Philosopher* in *Eunapius* was taller in his study, in time of speculation, then at any other time, so this meditation and study of this part of the *Book of life*, the *promises of Christ*, might be able to raise us above our ordinary pitch or stature, to ratifie and so to cleanse. Having therefore *promises*, let, &c.

2. Of all *promises* the conditionall are fittest for this turne, to oblige and engage us to purifying. 'Tis the property of conditionall promises never to belong to any but those that performe the condition: That which Christ requires of us in the great Indenture between him and us, as the homage to be perform'd to him on our part, be it never so sleight and unconsiderable, never so despicable a pepper-corne, so pitifully unproportionable to the great rent he might require, or to the infinite treasure of glory that he so makes over to us, that mite of obedience, of faith, of love, of purity, is yet most strictly required by Christ, even now (under the *Sanctima* of the Gospel) to be performed to him the mercy, and the pardon, and the huge moderation of that Court, though it hath mollified the strict Law into never so much Chancery, will not proceed further, and mollifie obedience into libertinisme; it hath treasures of mercy for those who have not obey'd the law in the strictnesse of perfect un-sinning obedience, the Evangelicall righteousness shall serve turne, where the Legall is not to be had; but then still there must be honest punctuall payment of the Evangelicall; and without that, the Gospel is so farre from being *Gospel*, message of mercy, embassage of promises, that it is but an enhancement, and accumulation of much sorer punishments on them, that have sinn'd against that, that have not obeyed the Gospel of Christ: Our Saviour hath

hath brought downe the market, provided as easie bargains of blisse for us, as could be imagin'd; but this being granted, you must not now phansie another farther second Saviour that must rid you of these easie gainfull tasks, which the first in meer kindnesse and benignity to you hath required of you.

Be heaven and the vision of God never so cheap a purchase, yet the *ῥῆμα* *ἁγίου*, the law of faith, of Gospel, is as that of the Medes and Persians, that no unclean thing shall enter therein, and that without holinesse (*ἁγιασύνη*, all one with the *ἁγιαία*, in the Text) without that sincere, though never so imperfect sanctification; without *cleansing*, mortifying here, no man shall ever see the Lord. Should any boyiterous, unclean, unqualified invader, *βιάζων* *ἑαυτὸν*, break in on those sacred mansions, commit such riots, such burglary upon heaven, heaven must be unconsecrated by such violence, cease to be the palace of God, a place of purity, or of blisse: & if this be not an argument fit to impresse this duty; the necessity, but withall the ease of the performance, the no heaven without it hereafter, and yet the no grievance by it here, if this be not an obligation to cleansing, I know not what may be counted such. He that hath taken down all the promises of the Gospel, as absolute, unconditionate promises, that sees his name written indeble in the *Book of Life*, I know not through what tube or perspective, and resolves that all the provocations, and sacriledges, and rebellions against heaven, shall never be able to resist his Nativicy, to disturbe his horoscope, to reverse his fatall destin'd blisse, may well be excused, if he be not over-hasty to cleanse, or pursue.

Tis an act of the most admirable power of the divine restraining, or preventing grace, that some men that doe thus believe this doctrine of unconditional promises, are yet restrain'd from making this so naturall use of it, from running into all the riots in the world.

And certainly, 'tis as irrefragable a convincing testimony of mans free will to evill, even after this reason and the spirit of God have offered him never so many arguments to the contrary, that many men which believe the *conditionate promises*, doe not yet set resolutely a *cleansing*, the obligation hereto from

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reason

reason being so direct, and conclusive, that all the Devils in hell cannot answer the force of it. Only our stupid, undisciplin'd, absurd, illogickall hearts have the skill to avoid it, running headlong, and wilfully after the old impurities, even then when they are most fully without all dubitancy resolved, that all the joyes of heaven are forfeited by this choice.

I have done with the second step in my gradation, the speciall convincing energy of the conditionall promises to enforce cleansing.

Come we now to the third and last step in the gradation, the particularity of the [these conditionall promises] in this Text, Promises of Gods receiving us, upon our separating, his being our Father, and we his Sons and Daughters, upon our coming out, &c. in the end of the former Chapter.

God will not receive any uncleansed, polluted sinner, will not be a father to any, be he never so importunate, or confident in his *κελευσας*, will not owne him to any degree of Sonship, that doth not bodily set a purifying.

'Twas a virulent objection, and accusation of the heathen Celsus against Christ, that he called all sinners to come unto him, Publicans, Harlots, all, and had an hospitable reception for such; from whence his ignorance and malice was willing to conclude Christs Church to be a sanctuary for such uncleanneses, a kind of Romulus's *asylum*, to be filled only with those inhabitants, which all other Religions had loath'd and vomited out; and 'twas Zozimus's descant upon Constantine, that he turned Christian, because he had committed those crimes, for which no other Religion would admit expiation. But Origen in his admirable Writings against that Heathens objections, makes a distinction of invitations; There is, saith he, the invitation of the Thiefe, and the invitation of the Physitian; of the Thiefe, to get as many companions, of the Physitian, as many patients as he can; the 1. to debauch the innocent, the 2. to recall the laps'd, to cure the diseased; the former to continue and confirm them in their former impure courses, the latter to purge out, and to reforme all their impurities; and the latter onely was the interpretation and designe of Christs calls, [that of sinners to repentance] the very language in this Text, the Come out and be you separate, and touch not the uncleane thing, And so Christianity in Zozimus's style, but another sense then what he design'd it, *ἀπὸ τῶν ἀκαθάρτων ἀπομάρτυροι*.

angrad & draupnir, the strongest purgative in the world, the Angel a hazening and leading out of Sodome, with an escape, flie for thy life, neither stay thou in all the plaines, and then, and not till then, az yod isdhaum dunt, and I will receive you.

And so still the peculiarity of these promiser, these of our being Sons, or our being received, hath a most perswasive quickning force toward the duty of purifying: Will any man be content to be that abject from God, that loathed refuse reprobated creature, such an one that all the prayers of all the Saints on earth, intercessions and suffrages of Martyrs, and Angels in heaven, yea the very gaping wounds and vocall blood of Christ upon the Crosse, I shall adde, the minutely advocation and intercession of that glorified Saviour at the right hand of his Father, cannot help to any tolerable reception at Gods hands? Can you have fortified your self sufficiently against that direfull voice of the *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire*, and not onely not God, but not the so much as *mountains or hills* willing or able to receive you into any tolerable degree of mercy, not one *Lazarus* with one drop to coole the tip of a flaming tongue, but only the gaping, insatiable pit, that irreverfible abyffe of pollutions, and of horror, that region of cursings and torments, of sin and flames, the onely hospitable to receive thee? If thou canst think comfortably of this condition, be well pleased to venture all this for the enlarging of thy carnall fructious one minute longer, and withall, disclaime the whole birth-right of thy Christendome, the dignity and inheritance of Sons and Daughters of the Lord Almighty, if thou dost not repent of thy long tedious prodigall march into the *Egyptian* far Country, onely to accompany with Swine, and be fed with their *weane*, to which the advantages of sin are compared, (that wooden, unhealthy fruit of the *Carobe*, or *arbor Ceratonia*, as *Dioscorides* and *Pliny* describe that which we render *hucks* in the Gospel) if, I say, we can upon deliberation, perfect this starving and pining in the herd, before feasting and being embraced in the Fathers house, this portion of Swine before that of Sons, we have then a sufficient fortification against this argument in this Text, a serious supersedeas for purifying: But upon no cheaper condition then this can it be sued out; you must give your selves

1 Ioh. 3. 3.

up to the certain fire and brimstone of *Sadome*; if you will still continue in the impurities and burnings of *Sadome*; not the least gleam of hope upon any tearmes but those of purifying; *Whoever hath this hope on him, the this*, that is, the conditionall hope, of seeing there or here of being received by God, if it be *ἐλπίς ἐν αὐτῷ*, hope on God, he purifies himself, saith Saint John. If he doe not purifie; 'tis either,

1. Not so much as *ἐλπίς*, absolute throwing off, disclaiming all hope, perfect fury and despair; or, if he have any hopefull thought about him, 'tis

2. None of the *ἐλπίς αὐτῷ*, none of the reasonable, grounded, conditionall, but a flattering, fallacious, foundationlesse, because unconditionall hope, which the bigger it swells, the more dangerous it proves; an aposteme or tympany of hope, made up either of air or putrid humor, and then ἡ πλεον ἐλπίς αὐτῷ, ταυτὴ μαλὸν κενώσ' ἔχει, like the consumptive Patient, the more he hopes, the farther he is gone, the more deeply desperate is his condition.

Or *ἐλπίς ἐν αὐτῷ*, hope on him, on God: 'Tis a dependence on some fatall chain (some necromantick trick, of beleiving thou shalt be saved, and thou shalt be saved) nay on Satan himself, some response from his Oracle, that ἐνλασείνουσθε, that wizard flesh within us, that hath thus bewitched us to its false pleasures first, and then its fallacious hopes, the fatalest, horriddest condition in the world; you may excuse the Preacher and the Apostle, if it carry them both into a kind of παθῶ, an outcry of love, and pity, and desire, to prevent this unremediable ruine to which thou art posting, to catch thee when thou art nodding thus dangerously, with a most affectionate, compassionate compellation, of a [dearly beloved] let us cleanse, which brings me to the second generall, The addresse, adding somewhat of earnestnesse, and somewhat of sweetnesse to the exhortation, Having therefore those promises, dearly beloved,

The Exhortation, to purifying, reforming, mortifying of sinnes, is an effect and expression of the greatest kindness, sincerest love, and tenderest affection imaginable! You shall see this exemplified by the most earnest lover that ever was in the world. Will you believe the Holy Ghost? Greater love then this hath no man shewed, then

then to lay downe his life for his friend; Now our Saviour you know laid downe his life, (somewhat more, then the life of a meer man, the life of the *Seandpar*, that divine celestiall person) on purpose to fetch back this divine, but scorned purity into the world again: he gave himself for us, saith Saint Paul, that hee might redeeme us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himselfe a peculiar people. Tit. 2. Laid down his life for that onely prize, to which the Apostle here exhorts, this of purifying: you shall see it again, Act. 3. ult. God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to blesse us, in turning every one from his iniquities; This turning from iniquities, the purifying in the Text, was the prime end and designe of Christs coming into the world, of all his glorious Offices, and the exercise of them; and that the most blessed work of mercy that could ever be meant to polluted soules, this turning is there the interpretation of his blessing of us [to blesse us in turning, &c.] 'Twere superfluous farther to assist this truth, in shewing you what an Act of benefaction and mercy, of charity and reall blessing it is, to contribute in any the smallest manner to the mortifying of any sin in any; 'Tis the rescuing him from the most noisom, miserable, putrefied, piteous condition in the world; the plagues of Egypt, the frogs and flies, and lice and locusts of Egypt, and the murrein and death of the first-born, were but the imperfect emblemes of these uncleanhated vermin in the soule, that devour all the fruit and corn of the land, all the Christian vertues and graces, despoil and depopulate all that is pretious or valuable in it; and then what proud Pharaoh would not fall on his knees to Moses to make use of his power with Heaven, to deliver him from such plagues as these?

And yet to see, how quite contrary 'tis ordered in the world, God is faine to send suppliants to us, that we will but be content to part with an impurity, that wee will but endure so huge a blessednesse. You know wee are Ambassadors for Christ, and what is the nature of an Ambassage? why, setting up this impure unmortified sinner in a Throne (to have an Ambasse addressed to him is an argument of a Prince) and not onely men, but God himselfe, as it were, prostrate before his footstoole, the King of Heaven to this proud reigning sinner

ner on earth, to beseech him but to part with these weapons of his hostility against God, these provoking impurities; *as though God did beseech you by us, (God himselfe become the suppliant, and then wee Ministers may very well bee content with the employment) we pray you in Christs stead, be ye reconciled unto God.* Thus through the whole Book of *Canticles* the beloved Husband of his Church most passionately a wooing her to this duty, to this opening to him, giving him an admission, all upon this score that hee might come in to blesse and purifie, and O what Rhetorick is bestowed on her; far beyond the [dearly beloved] in this text, *Open to me my love, my dove, my undefiled, my fair one!* hee calls her fair and undefiled, on purpose that hee may make her such, and O that we had but that Saviour-like passion, that blessing kindnesse to our owne poore perishing Soules, some of those bowels of love to our owne bowels! That we have not, is the greatest defect of self-love, the most contrary sinne against our grand fundamentall principle, that of self-perswasion (which can combine with the Devill for the undermining, and ruining, and subverting of whole kingdomes, on that one commanding designe of getting off the Crosse from off our own shoulders, on whomsoever it be laid, but cannot think fit to assist Heaven in purging out one refuse impurity out of the soul) yet shall I not on such discouragements give it over as a forlorn impossible hope, but proceede one stage farther on this errand, to the last generall, the exhortation it selfe *usdneis' canth' saures, &c: Let us cleanse our selves.* 1. *Cleanse,* 2. *our selves,* 3. *us our selves,* the verb is active, the pronoun reciprocall, and the verb and pronoun both plural; And so beside the duty it self of *cleansing*, two Circumstances of this duty wee may learne from hence, namely, 1^{ly} that it is the Christians task upon himself, this of *purifying*, then 3^{ly} that it ought to be the common united designe of all Christians, the Apostle and people together, to assist one another in this work, this of *purifying*.

For the first, the duty it self, *usdneis' canth' saures, &c: Let us cleanse our selves.* This is not the actuall acquiring, but the motion and proficiency and tendency toward purity.

And so there again you have two things.

1. *What*

1. *What is thy purity is.*

2. *What is thy motion toward purity.*

The purity is of two sorts; the first, opposed to filth. The second to mixture: as the Wine is pure both when 'tis fetched off from the lees and dregs, and when 'tis not mingled with water. In the first notion, the purifying here, is the purging out of carnality; in the second, of hypocrisie: the first, is the *clean heart* in David; the second, the *right or sincere, single or simple spirit*: the first, from the filthiness of the flesh; the second, of the spirit: and you will never be prosperous Alchymists, never get the Philosophers stone, never acquire the grand Christian hope, if you miscarry in either of these.

The first kind of purity again, that of the flesh is twofold, proportionably to the two fountains and sources of carnality, *ambushia & dupis, lust and rage*, that again corrupt, infernall paire, that hath so undermined the peace of souls and kingdoms.

Last, the common parent both to all fleshly and all worldly desire, to the *lust of the flesh*, and the *lust of the eye*; the *lust of the flesh* again, either the warm, or the moist carnality, the burnings of the incontinent, or the thirsts of the luxurious; that deluge of fire and water, that had, and shall have the honour to divide betwixt them the first and second ruine of the world. And for the *lust of the eye*, that cold dry piece of sensuality, that strange kinde of Epicurisme, that mad raving passion after stones and minerals, the deifying of that forlorne Element which, saith Aristotle, *πορνικὴν τὴν ἄλυσιν*; could never get any advocate to plead for it, that which struck Moses into such a passion, these people have committed a great sin, have made them gods of gold; this love of the world, and things of the world, extravagant desire, hot pursuit of such cold embraces (like the Embalmers in Herodotus, that had flames toward the chilled earth, the Carkasses before them) this dry, juicelesse sinne, is yet able to pollute and defame the soule, as earth, you know, is as apt to foule and sully, as any thing, covetousness is as irreconcilable with purity, as incontinence, and intemperance, and all with the *ἀκαθάρτητα*, the these promises in the Text.

So, in the second place, for that of *rage*, 'tis a fruitfull seem-

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ing mother, which contains all the more sublime kinds of carnality, pride and ambition, and all the generation of those Vipers, Gal. 5. 20. hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, and the like, all prime workes of the flesh, ver. 19. though somewhat more volatile, and aereall, i. e. have more of Satan and Lucifer in them then the other; even hee that but fides in religion, that makes that band of all charity and humility, an engine of faction or pride, that saith, *I am of Paul*, &c. is hee not carnall? 1 Cor. 3. 5. the most undoubted carnality in the world; A multitude of finnes there are under this one head, able to bespot a man, and a Nation into a Leopard, and those spots are farre from being the spots of finnes, reconcilable with the promises of this Text. But above all, one that pollutes in graine, that crimson dye, the guilt of blood, in which those soules that are rolled; (as every malicious, unpeaceable spirit certainly is, though he never had the courage to shed any) looke so direfull in Gods sight, that in comparison with them, the mire and mud of the basest swine may passe for a tolerable beauty; the blood of men, saith *Psellus*, yeelding a fume or nidour, that the Devils (and sure none but of their complexion and dyet) are fed and fatned with: and *Maimonides*, to the same purpose, that 'tis the food of Devils, that he that can feed on it, is a guest *עוֹרֵי מַיִם* at the table of Devils, and literally guilty of that which Saint Paul mentions so sadly, 1 Cor. 10. 20. *I would not that ye should have fellowship with Devils*, partake of that Cyclops feast, prepared, like Hell, peculiarly for the Devils and his Angels, (those great *Abaddons* and *Apollyons*) and cannot without injury and riot bee snatched out of his hands, bewilled and wallowed in by us; those *זבֵּחַ אֱלֹהִים* (that were so scandalously charged on the Primitive Christians, and cost *Justin Martyr* and *Athenagora*, such Apologies) their feasting on one anothers flesh, which charge should it be now resumed, and brought in by Turks or Indians against us Protestants (as they say it is, but certainly will be, when it is told in *Guth* and *Aiken*) Good God! what should we doe for an Apologist?

Come we then in the last place to the last degree of purity, that excludes hypocrisie or mixture, the sinne which
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hath so dyed this Nation, given it an heir apparence to all the Pharisees Woes; Not only that notion of hypocrisie, which in our ordinary speech hath engrossed the title, the vain-glorious publishing all our own Acts of piety; Oh! that is but a puny degree of this sinne, I know not whether I should not do well to give it some good words, in comparison to its contrary, the desiring to appear more impure, more impious then we are (that grosse confident, bold fac'd devill, the farre more dangerous of the two) but, I say, the other more secret nice hypocrisie, the falseness to God, taking in rivals into the heart, the partiall, halting, mutilate, obedience, that which keeps a reserve for Satan, for Mammon, for my self, when all should be given up to God; But above all, that yet profounder piece, the Egyptian Temple, a most glorious Fabrick, most piteously inhabited, nothing but Cats and Crocodiles within in stead of Gods; that of the painted *Sepulchre*, the noisome, poysonous secrecie, under the loveliest disguise, the Vault or Charnel-houise, of rottenness, of all the impurity in the world, (the deep digged *Golgotha*, and *Abeldama*) under the fairest and most inviting inscription; that histrionicall piece of the Beasts tragedy, the couchant, but *ravening Wolves under the Sheeps clothing*, the God brought in for the basest services, the impurest contrivances, and never pretended to, or thought on, till we had those vile employments for him; And this you will acknowledge sufficiently inconsistent with the *purifying* in this Text, and so with the [*these promises.*]

Having given you the severals of this purity by the contrary branches of the *impurity*, wee come now to the [*rebacke*] the notion of *cleansing* or *purifying*, that is here so vehemently required of us; and that is not the having acquired this purity, having attained any perfection of this state in either kinde, but onely the beginning on the way, the constant motion and growth, a setting out, and progress and proficiency in it, a dayly purging and rinsing of the soul, that good innocent kind of *sybarismus*, that pardonable Pharisaism of assiduous washings, a dayly slaughtering of the great defilers one after another, one day of execution for lust, another for rage, one for the impurities of the tongue, the oaths, the lies, the prophanations, the

blasphemies, the noisome unfavoury discourses, (Blessed Lord, that this might but be the day of demolishing that Babel of strange heathen languages, the least degree of which is intolerable among Christians!) another for the impurities of the Eye, and a whole Ocean of purgations lieth enough for that; but above all, an every day care for the drying up the great Fountain of Leprosie in the heart. In a word, a firme ratified resolution of mortifying and crucifying, a devoting and consecrating all, and making as much speed with them as we can. To that end, though the perfect purity be not acquired, yet must these three affaires be made toward it, these three degrees of ascent and proficiency observed.

1. Barring up the inlets, obstructing the avenues, against all future breakings in of the great polluters, the resisting all fleshly temptations, (by the remembrance, how deare they have formerly cost our soules, what floods of tears, if wee have done our duty, what a whole ship of purgatives to get out one spot so contracted) but especially stopping the recurrence of the old prophane polluted habits, that *as the swine*, the cleansed swine returned to her old beloved wallowing again.

2. Our daily, minutely recourse to that *digitus Dei*, finger of God, which alone, say the Jews, can cleanse Leapers with a Lord. *if thou wilt, thou canst make us clean*, thou canst prepare new *Jordans* of grace, beyond all our Rivers of *Damascus*, new bankes, new treasures of purity.

And then 3. taking the seasonable advice of the Syrian servants, going downe, and washing in that *Jordan*, acting upon our selves by the power of this grace, thus sely co-operating with God to the utmost of our derivative strength; not lying like Creeples on the bank, when we have a *Bethesda* before us, which yet will cleanse none but those that goe into it; and that brings me to the former of the two circumstances (belonging to this duty) denoted by the *lauris*, cleanse our selves, that it is the Christians task upon himselfe, this of purifying, *ad seipsum laurde*, let us cleanse our selves.

'Tis the prerogative of the grace of Christ, that hee that is vouchsafed his portion of that, is thereby thus enabled to mortifie sinne, and advance toward purity, and it is the duty of
all

all: that are thus vouchsafed and digallied, to make use of that strength to that end, is *purify themselves*. For as *Aquinas* observes out of *Aristotle*, that those things are possible for us, which are possible by our friends; so what we are enabled to doe by the grace of Christ, we are able to doe; Hee that is born of God, is born an *athlete*, and victor, the whole world is but a Pygmy before him; this is the privilege of that high descent, that be he the impotentest creature in the world, considered in his naturall, carnall, or morall principles, either as *born of blood*, or of the wil of the flesh, or of the wil of man, he hath yet an acquisition of a kind of omnipotence, from the derived communicated strength of Christ, as hee is born of God; *Ex quo uero, hee can doe all things through Christ that strengthens him.* God by his preventing and subsequent grace workes in the Christian to will, and to doe, meerly of his good pleasure of bounty, and then the exhortation belongs to that Christian, to *work*; and *work out his salvation*.

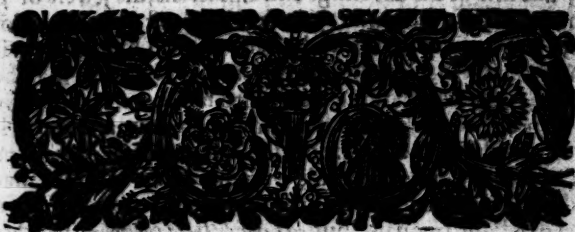
And were but the care and paines employed in the using and improving those talents which God hath given us, and calling to heaven for supplies; which is mispent and paunted away in pleading our impotencies and disabilities and wants of grace, (that is, in *excusing*, in the old heathen stile, Gods illiberall dealing with his children,) charging Heaven with all our failings) we might certainly reap better fruit of our time, be fairer proficients in this art of *purging*; and in the meane, may spend our spirits most profitably in calling and hazening one another to this so possible, and withall so necessary task; and that is the last particular; that it ought to be the united designe of all Christians, the Apostle and people together, to aid, and assist one another in this work of *purifying*, by intreaties, by exhortations, by all the engagements of love, and duty, *as the Lord saith, let us cleanse our selves.*

The work, it is acknowledged, though possible to be gone through with, in such a measure as shall be sure of acceptance, is yet of some more then ordinary difficulty; How long hath this poore Nation been about it? So many yeares in the Refiners fire, in Gods furnace for purifying, worne out and rent to pieces under the Fallers sope; and yet (God knows) as full of drosse

and spots as ever, the poore Leaper kingdome thrust out of the camp, (the Temple) banished from the old priviledges of the Israelite, the Oracle and the service of God, God spitting in the face of it, in *Moses stile*, (a kind of excommunicate state) al on that charitable purpose, that it might bee ashamed and apply it selfe to the Priest, to God for his purgatives; I shall adde, looked upon, prayed over by that Priest so many yeares together, and that cure still as farre from being perfected as ever, the leprosie spreading in the skin, the sinnes a multiplying under the Priests inspection, under Gods rod, at the end of a seven years rinsing (not with sope, but nitre) a thousand times more odious spots, more provoking sinnes, more hellish impurities, then before. I remember what poor Porphyry was faine to doe in pursuit of purgatives, the same that *Saul* after the commission of his sinne that rent the kingdome from him, betooke himselfe to *divination & witchcraft*, to magick and conjuring, made friends to the Devill to helpe purifie him. O that we having met with luckier prescriptions, (recipe's from heaven, that would be sure to prove successfull) would not betray all for want of applying them, that while it is called to day, while a poore spotted Kingdome lyes a gasping, the benefit of the last plunge, the *single immersion*, might not be quite let slip, that this of purifying the only true expedient yet untryed (whilest all others are experimented to be but meer Empeiricall state-mountebankry) might at length be thought on, prosecuted with some vigour, every man entering into the retirement of his owne breast, there to search and view the spotted patient, the plague, the leprosie of his own heart; and again, every man making his arts of cure as communicative and diffusive, as charitable and Catholick as he can; that as *David* was ravished with joy, when they said unto him, *Let us goe into the house of the Lord*, (that pleasant news and spectacle, a conspiracy for piety) so we for that onely errand that sends us all to that house, the beginning and advancing of purity; Every man, like an Israelite in his flight from *Egypt*, not only going out in hast, (a passeover toward purity) but also dispoiling his *Egyptian* neighbours, robbing one of his lusts, another of his detractions, one of his Atheisticall oaths, another of his swinish excesses, one of his Infidell tremblings and basenesses,

nesses, another of his coverings and ambitions, his jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiments; his most valued precious sinnes, (the curses with which he hath clothed himselfe as with a garment, and which would one day, if they were not scatched from him, come like scalding water into his bowels, and oil into his bones) and so yet, if it be possible, come out a troupe, a legion of naked Wrestlers, a whole shoole of candidates toward purity. Till somewhat be done this way, more then hitherto hath been done; peace may hover over our heads, expells its willingness to light upon us, but *ad candida testis columba*, that dove will not enter or dwell where purity hath not prepared for her, or if she should unlearn her own humour, were danger she should turn Vultur, that most desirable blessing prove our fatallest curse, leave us in, and to a state of all impurities, to deprecate and curse those mercies, that had betrayed us to those irreversible miseries. Lord purge, Lord cleanse us, doe thou break those vessels of ours that will not be purified, cast us again into what furnace thou please, that wee may at length leave our drosse, our filth behinde us, and having used thine own methods toward this end, and purged our eyes to see that it is thou that hast thought this necessary for us, that hast of very mercy, very fidelity thus caused us to be troubled, work in us that purity here, which may make us capable of that vision, that peace, that fulnesse of sanctity, and glory hereafter; Which God of his infinite abyss of purity grant us all, to whom with the son, that image of his Fathers purity, and the holy, sanctifying, purifying Spirit, &c.

CHRIST.



CHRIST *and* BARABBAS.

The VII. being a *Lent Sermon*

At OXFORD, *An. Dom. 1643.*

JOHN 18. 40.

Not this Man, but Barabbas.



His passage of story not unagreeable to the time, (every day of Lent being a *quadragesima*, to the Passion Week) hath much of the present humour of the World in it, whether we consider it as an act of Censure, or as an act of Choice: both these it is here in the Jewes,

1. An act of popular Censure, *i. e.* most perfect injustice, very favourable to the Robber, and very severe to Christ; *Barabbas* may be releas'd, the vilest wretch in the world, one that was attach'd for robbery, and *insurrection* may become the peoples Favourite, be pitied and pleaded for, and absolutely pardon'd, *Dat varian corvis*, the blackest Devils in Hell shal passe without any of our malice, our indignation, our animosities;

ties, but an *innocent* Christ, or any of his making, one that comes from Heaven to us, upon errands of holiness, of reformation, that by authority of his doctrine and example would put vice out of countenance, discover our follies, or reproach our madnesse, and in the Wisemans phrase, *upbraide our wayes, and reprove our thoughts*, he that hath no sins to qualifie him for our acquaintance, no oathes, no ribaldry to make him good company, none of the compliances or vices of the times to commend him to our friendship, at least to our pardon, none of that new kind of popularity of being as debauch'd and profestly vitious as other men, shall be suspected, and feared, and hated, the most odious, unpardonable, unsufferable neighbour, *grievous unto us even to bebo'd*, *Wisd. 2. 15.* Innocence is become the most uncomely degenerate quality, vertue the most envious, censorious thing; the not being so near Hell as other men, the most ridiculous scrupulosity, and folly in the world. And the misery of it is, there is no discoursing, no reasoning this humour out of us, they had cryed once before, and the crossing doth but more enflame them; the charm, that should have exorcized, doth but enrage the evill spirit, *Then cried they all again, saying, not this man, but Barabbas.*

But beside this, I told you, these words might be taken in another notion, and under that it is that we are resolved to handle them, as an act of the *Jewes choice*, of their absolute inconditionate decree, their *loving* of Barabbas, and *hating* of Jesus, not before they had done either good or evil, but after one had done all the evil, t'other all the good imaginable; then *hating* the *Jacob* and *loving* the *Esau*: electing the *Robber*, and rejecting the *Saviour*; the Barabbas becomes a Barabbas indeed, according to the origination of the name, a son of a father, a beloved son in whom they are well pleased, a chosen vessel of their honour, and Christ the only refuse vessel of dishonour, the only unamiable, undesirable, formlesse, beaurlesse reprobate in the masse: *Non hunc, sed Barabbam, Not this man, &c.*

In the words under the notion of the *Choice*, you may please to take notice of these severals:

1. A Competition precedaneous to this Choice, presumed here, but express'd in Saint Mat: *tho' tharts in th' d's, which of the two will ye, &c.*

2. The Competitors, *Barabbas* and *Christ*.

3. The Choise it self, not onely preferring one before t'other, *non hunc sed*, but 1. absolutely rejecting of one, *non hunc*, not this man, and then by way of necessary refuge pitching upon t'other; *non hunc, sed Barabbam, Not this man but Barabbas.*

And of these in this order,

And 1. of the first, That there is a Competition before what the Competitors are, or what the Choice.

1. I say that there is a Competition, a canvass, or plying, before we come to choose any thing; This is a truth most constantly observable in all, which we are most concern'd in, in that transcendent interest, the businesse of our souls. Were there but one object represented to the faculty, one Christ, one holinesse, one salvation, the receiving him would be any thing rather then Choice, Chance it might be, or Necessity it might be; Chance it might be, that such a thing had the luck to come first, to prepossesse and forestall us, to get our favour when there was no body else to sue for it; And indeed he that should be godly, or Christian on such a felicity as this, thorow ignorance onely, or non-representation of the contrary, he that should give his voice unto Christ, because there was no body else to canvass for it, that if *Mahomet* had plied him first, would have had as much faith for the Alchoran, as he hath now for the Bible, been as zealous for a carnall, sensuall, as now for a pure spirituall Paradise; he that if he had been born of heathen Parents, or put out to nurse to an Indian, would have suck'd in as much of Gentilisme, as by this civill English education he hath attain'd to of the true Religion, that hath no *superstitions*, no fortification against worshipping of Sun and Moon, positing from one heathen shrine (as now from one Sermon) to another, but onely that Christianity bespake him earliest, that Idolatry was not at leisure to crave his favour, when Protestancy got it, is, I confesse, a Christian, he may thank his stars for it, *planetarius Sanctus*, a Saint, but such an one, as

Jew would have been, might he have been a Changeling
 floll'n into that cradle, or the most barbarous *Chimi-Infidell*,
 had he had as he of old, *fortunam Cesaris*, so *fortunam Christiani*,
 the Christians fortune to have tutor'd him: And so for vertue
 and sin lesnesse also, he in whom 'tis not conscience, but bash-
 fulnesse, and ignorance of vice, that abstains onely from un-
 creditable or unfashionable, from branded or disused sins,
 swears not onely because he hath not learnt the art of it, hath
 not yet gotten into the Court, or into the Army, the schools
 where that skill is taught, the shops where those reverst thun-
 derbolts, so tempestuously shot against Heaven, are forg'd, he
 that is no Drunkard, or Adulterer, no malicious person, onely
quia nemo, because he hath no company to debauch, no
 strength to maintain, no injury to provoke the uncommitted
 sinne, is all this while but a child of fate, born under a benigne
 aspect, more Lucky, but not more Innocent, more Fortunate,
 but not more Vertuous then other men.

Again, if there were no Competition, as it might be Chance,
 so it might be Necessity too; Thou art faine to be vertuous, be-
 cause thou canst be nothing else, goodnesse must go for thy re-
 fuge, but not thy choice, were there no rivall sin, no Compe-
 titor lust to pretend for thee.

'Tis therefore not onely an act of *wisdomie*, but of *goodnesse* too,
 observable in Gods wonderfull dispensation of things under
 the Gospel, to leave the Christian, *ex subleis* in the confines
 of two most distant people, improvable into good, and capable
 of evil, like *Erasmus's* Picture at Rome, or that vulgar fable, for
 tis no better, of *Mahomet's* Tombe betwixt two Load-stones,
ἀπορίστημα δὲ τὸν ἀμαρτωλόν, as *Synefin* calls it, a stake between
 God on one side, and all the Devils in Hell on t'other, made
 up of a *Canaanite* and an *Israelite*, a law in the members, as well
 as a law in the mind, or as **Antonius*, *uirum ex paucis*, perswasions
 in the members, many topicks of Rhetorick, many strong alle-
 ctives to evil in the lower carnall part of the man, as wel as in-
 vitations and obligations to good in the upper and spirituall.
 Thus did God think fit to dispose it even in Paradise it self,
 the flesh tempted with carnall objects even before the first sin
 had disordered that flesh, A Palace for the sweetnesse of the

Apple to please, and an Eye for the beauty to invite, as well as an upper masculine faculty, a Reason for commands to awe, and threats to deter; yea and it seems in Heaven it self, and the Angels there, where is no flesh and blood, that *officina cupidinum*, shop or work-house of desires, yet even there, is an inlet for Ambition, though not for Lust, a liableness to the *filthinesse* of the spirit, though not of the flesh, or else Lucifer had still stood Favourite, could never have forfeited that state of blisse. And so 'tis ever since in this inferiour orbe of ours, Behold! I set before thee life and death, blessing and cursing, on one side all the joies of Heaven to ravish and enrap thee, the mercies of Christ to draw thee with the cords of a man, with the bands of love, to force and violence thy love by loving thee first, by setting thee a copie of that heavenly passion to transcribe, but then withall death in the other scale, death which it seems hath something amiable in it too, it would not be so courted else, a *propositum exitus*, as Macarius styles it, a gallantry of Hell, a purple garment of darknesse, that such sholes of men, and I tremble to think and say, so large a quantity of bapized Christians are so ambitious of, sell all that's comfortable and valuable in this life to purchase it: and were there not both these set before us by God, life on one side, and death on t'other, blessing on one side, and cursing on t'other, a double carvasse for thy soule, a rivalry, a competition, and somewhat our both sides amiable to somewhat in thee, life to the immortall, death to the perishing part of thee, blessing to the rationall divine, cursing to the bedlam brutish part of thee, the man of God could not go on, as he doth in that place, *Deut. 30. 19. therefore chuse life that thou and thy sons may live.* Were there but one in our reach, 'twere necessity still and not choise, and that most absolutely destructive of all judgment to come; Hell might be our Fate, but not our Wages, our Destiny, but not our Reward, and Heaven any thing more truly then a Crown of righteousness.

A piece of the Philosopher there hath been a long while in the world; that hath had a great stroke in debauching the Divine, that the Understanding doth necessarily and irresistibly move the Will, that whatever hath once pass'd thr *judicium practicum*,

got not only the assent of the judgment, that 'tis true, but the allowance also that 'tis good, & fit to be chosen, cannot chuse but be desired, and prosecuted by the will; from whence the Divine subsumes that where Faith is once entred, though that but a speculative (I wish it were not sometimes but a phantastical) Faith, there works must, and will infallibly follow. I confesse it were admirable news, if this were true, if all that *know these things*, were sure to *doe them*, if there were no such thing possible, as sin against Light, sin against Gospel, sin against Conscience, if the lives of Believers could not prove Infidel, the actions of those that acknowledge God, that make no doubt of the truth of Christianity, could not avoid or escape being Godlike and Christian, if 'twere but a flash of Saint *Austines* wit, that the wicked Infidel believes contrary to faith, the wicked Believer lives contrary to it; There were then but one care left a Christian, to be catechized aright, which the Solifidian calls Faith, or to be confident of his own election, which the Fiduclary calls Faith, and then *Quis separabit*, any thing else will be wrought in me by Christ, or that any thing else will be unnecessary to be wrought. In stead of this Pagan principle, that ties up all in the chains of inevitable Fate, if it be examined, give me leave to mention to you one aphorisme of Christian Philosophy, which is but the interpretation of the competition that now I speak of; that the Will is no more necessitated to obey the suggestions of Reason then of the sensuall appetite, of the upper then the lower soule, that 'tis an indifferent middle faculty, able to chuse the *evill* and refuse the *good*, or (to satisfie the Philosophers importunity, which resolves it impossible to chuse the *evill*, unlesse under the appearance of *good*, you may take it in a clearer notion) able to chuse the pleasant and refuse the honest, to chuse the sensuall carnall and refuse the intellectuall spirituall good: And that you may see the ground of this, observe that the whole man is made up of three parts, *Spirit, Soule, and Body*.

1. The *Body or flesh* lusting against the *Spirit*. And 2. the *Spirit* again lusting against the *flesh*. Those two extreame perfectly contrary one to the other in their appetites, and therefore called by the Antients, *masculine, & feminine*, one the masculine,

either the feminine part, or the monarch in the soule, either the *Wife*, or continuallity, one the *Wife*, the *Master*, either the *Wife*, or Child, one the *God*, is *spirit*, the voice and image of God in us, either the *Wife*, the bestiall part, one the Man, either the *Wife*, the four-footed creatures in us; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that you cannot doe, or, as the Greek, *the ut non ut*, so that you do not, this is a consequent of that contrariety, you doe not the thing that you would, i. e. perhaps perfectly, purely without some tack or mixture; however, I am sure, not quietly, slyly, without some opposition of the other: And then comes in in the third place, *the Will*, the Elective faculty, i. e. the Will becometh them, courted, and solicited by both, as that which hath the determining, casting voice; If the beast can carry it, if the sensuall suggestions get the consent of the Will, obtain the embrace, have its carnall proposals yielded to, then in the Apostles phrase *lust conceives*, and within a while proceeds from consent to act, bringeth forth sin; but when the *Spirit* prevails, when the Reason, the Conscience, the God within thee is allow'd to be heard, when that chaste, sober, matronly spouse gets the embraces, the consent of the Will, then the *Spirit* conceives, and from thence spring all the *spirituall*, which the Scripture speaks of, the fruits and productions of the *spirit*. You see now the competition, the constant importunities and solicitations, the rivalry for thy Soule, not an action of moment or importance in thy life, but the house is divided about it, the *Spirit* for one way, and the *flesh* for another, and that that prevails, i. e. gets the Will of its side, denominates the action, and the action frequently and indulgently reiterated, denominates thee either *flesh* or *spirit*, either captive to the law of sin, or obedient to the commands and dictates of Christ, a carnall sinner, or a spirituall disciple.

And then my brethren by way of use;

1. You see the answer to that hard probleme, What is the reason and ground of the infinitesse of those punishments that await sinners in another world: Here you have the oyle that maintains that accursed Vestall fire, so much beyond Tullbold's or Pallar's Lamp in Lyette, burning so many Ages under ground

ground and not confirmed. Now, this competition in this Text (*the one shall be of life, which of the two infinities will you*) and that other we mentioned of *life and death, blessing and cursing*, set before us by God, the leaving to our option whether of the two infinities we will have; This, and nothing; but this hath made it most perfectly reasonable, that *Desires* should perish eternally, that he that will content on immortal life, that *is in xpois vita*, as *Clement Saint Paul's* contemporary calls it, that eternity put into our hands by *Christ*, and make his deliberate covenant with death, that his immortal part may die eternally, should be thought worthy, as the *Book of Wisdom* hath it, to take his portion or part with it. And then, *sedes* *sanctae* *an* *eternae* *gloriae*

2. O how much the more care, and caution, and vigilance will it require at our hands to keep guard over that one faculty, that spring of life and death, that fountain of sweet and poisonous water, that of clusing or rejecting, willing or nilling; never to dispense those favours loosely or prodigally, never to deny them rashly or unadvisedly, but upon all the mature deliberation in the world! *Capthly heart with all might, the heart* this principle of action, keep it about all keepings, for out of it are the issues of life, Prov. 4. 23. That when I would be good, evil is present with me, temptations of the carnall appetite to the contrary, it matters little, so I hold off my consent, resist their importunity, and let all the Devils in Hell as with Spurring blasphemy within me, it matters as little, so I reject the suggestions. Resist, and he shall flie, that he is loose to tempt, this is my infelicity perhaps, but not my guilt, I and that mishap improved into a blessing, *id est subiect*, this tempts a kind of donation of Heaven, to busie my patience, and exercise my vigilance, so to set out my Christian valour, to make me capable of the victory first, and then the crown; the Nations left to prove Israel, *Jud. 3. 2.* yea, and to teach them warrewise, 2. at least such as before knew nothing thereof. Onely be sure that those Nations get not the upper hand, so that purpose that they be not pamper'd and fed too high, till they grow perverse and unruly, that this *jumentum hominis*, as S. Jerome calls it, this Ass, or beast-part of the man prove not the Rider's Master: this is the greatest danger first, and then reproach in the world, which you will more discern

differen if you proceed from the competition to the Competitors; and consider who they are; in us Spirit and Flesh, God and the Devil, as in the Jews Barabbas and Christ; my second particular.

'Tis none of the least of Gods mercies among his dispensations of providence, that the competition falls to be betwixt such persons so acknowledgedly distant; and hugely contrary, a Christ and a Barabbas; the one so pretious; and the other so vile, the Prince of peace, and the Authour of an Insurrection, a saviour and an *inimicus*, a Saviour, and a Destroyer; had it been betwixt a Christ and a Nicodemus, a Carpenters Sonne, and a Rabby or Ruler in Israel, the choice might have been more difficult; or the mistake more pardonable; But so God loved the world, such were the riches of his goodnesse to an insatuated rebellious people, he sets before them a beautifull Christ, and an odious foyle to make him more beautifull, to make it impossible for them to be so mild, as to refuse and finally to reject Christ, that was on such grounds, and in such company a suing and importuning for their favour, none but a Barabbas to pretend against him, that that notion had of him might serve in stead of the fishes gill to recover the blind Tobies sight, help the blindest naturall man to discern somewhat tolerable, if not desirable, in the Christ, that in so poor a choice, an undervalued, prejudg'd, scandalous Jesus might have leave to be considered, and owe a *preferment alienis vitiis* to the faults of the other, though not *virtutibus suis* to any thing amiable or estimable in himself. The same oconomy you may generally observe even from the first of Paradise to this day; When our first parents were the prize, the Competitors were of somewhat a distant making, God and the Serpent, not the King of Heaven and one of his chief Courtiers, God and an Archangel of light, but God and a damned Spirit, a black Prince; and he but in very homely disguise, but of a Serpent, which though he were then a *terrapin* or, as Cedrenus out of some of the Antients wil have it, somewhat a taller and goodlier creature, then now the Serpent is, that his Legs be cut off, yet the Text saith, a beast for all that, I and that beast branded for craft, infamous for the subtilst creature, and so not likely to prove the most honest and sollicitous of their

their good; and this cunning *Pytho* had made friends to speak, contrary to his kind, there was sure some forcery in that, and all this, one would think, was enough to have added authority to God by such a prejudged Competitor. And just so was it to the Israelites at their coming out of *Egypt*, God & a cruel *Pharaoh*, a Deliverer and a Tyrant, one to have them slaves in *Egypt*, t'other to have them Princes in *Canaan*; a sufficient inequality betwixt the Pretenders, that it might be impossible for any to prefer the Onions and the Garlick before the Manna and the Kingdome. After 'twas betwixt God and a golden Calse, a Calse still, no very honorable creature, though 'twere of gold; and anon betwixt God and a brasen Serpent, Serpent & brasen too, neither form, nor metall to commend it, and all along through the heathen world the competition was yet more unquall, betwixt the God of Heaven, and Wood and Stone of the Earth, the most glorious Creator, and vilest Creature, nay the piece of wood, as the Prophet sets it, that was not fit for any use, not so much as to be burnt, *the very refuse of the refuse* is the thing the Idol was made of, and none but that Idol thought fit to be a Competitor with God for the adoration. If you look back to *Judæa* again, at the time of the great competition for the hearts of *Israel* betwixt *Rehoboam* and *Jeroboam*, it was still of the same making, betwixt a Kings son, and a Servant, a right Heir and a cunning Seducer, a kinde of Serpent again, yes, and betwixt the glorious Temple of *Jerusalem* on one side, and the upstart *Dan* and *Bethel* on t'other, the high Priest on one side, and the basest of the People on the t'other, betwixt the Calves at that *Dan*, and the Cherubims at that *Jerusalem*, and so still there was advantage enough, one would think, on Gods side against such Competitors; And if we look now abroad into the most idoliz'd adored *Diana's*, the sins that get all the custome away from Christ, the onely rivals with him for our souls, we shall find them but little advanced above that old pitch, little lovelier thē the Serpent, just such are our crafts, our unsanctified counsels, our wily artifices, that have nothing but Serpent in their composition, little honourabler then the Calse, just such are our Gods of gold, which I cannot mention, but in *Moses* passion, *O this people have committed a great sin, have made them Gods of gold!* all piety transformed and contracted into the worship of

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that one shrine, our *gaine* the onely godlinesse we can hear of: and then a multitude more, of a yet viler making, fit onely for a competition with that knotty refuse piece of wood of which the Idol was made: the more shame they should outvie a most glorious God, a Christ, that if he had nothing in his life amiable, yet hath died for us, and so hath dearly purchased a title to our love, yea and a blessed Spirit, come downe on purpose to sublime our iudicative faculty, to convince the world of the unreasonablenesse of sin; yea and a poor thirsty panting soule (which hath some reason to expect kindnesse from us) a heaven and an immortall blisse.

Consider but a few of that glittering train of raigning sins in this our Land, in this my auditory, and be astonished O earth, that they should ever be received in competition with Christ. The oaths that all the importunity of our weekly Sermons turned into Satyr against that sin, cannot either steale or beg from us, what gain or profit do they afford us? which of our senses do they entertaine, which of our faculties do they court? an empty profitlesse temptationlesse sin, sensuality onely to the devil-part in us, fumed out of hell into our mouths in a kind of hypochondriacal fit; an affront to that strict command of Christ, his *ego autem*, to his Disciples, *Eni I say unto you*, Christians, *swere not at all*: the best quality that it can pretend to, is that that Hierocles of old mentions with indignation *πρὸς ἀναντιρροσίαν λόγου*, to fill up the vacuities of the speech, to expresse and man a rage, *i. e.* to act a mad man the more perfectly. And of him that hath in his time sworn over all the hairs of his head, I would still ask but this one question, *τίνα τίτην καρπὸν*, what fruit had he then of this sin, (then when it was full in his mouth, a swelling his cheeks) whereof he is now ashamed, cannot chuse but blush, his eares glow, or be in some pain till I have done speaking of it: and yet beyond this, the end of those things is death, a severall fiend in hell most sadly to come, the payment of every of those gainlesse oaths. It were but a *δολωρ*, or cold addresse to this kind of sinner, to bespeak him in that expostulating stile; what advantageth it to gain the whole world and lose his owne soule? 'twere more to his purpose to demand, what
advan-

*advantageth it him to gaine not one atome, or most diminutive part of the world, not the least acquisition of any thing desirable even to the carnall man, satisfactory to any part of his appetite, save that (in a manner, Platonick) designlesse love of sinning, and ruining his owne soule, and yet to doe that as sure, as if he had Satans totum hoc, his whole Exchequer of wealth and honour in exchange for it? I shall rather adde, what shall that man give in exchange for his soul to get it back again, which he hath parted with so cheap without any barter, sold it for nought and taken no mony for it, in the Psalmists phrase, and now cannot redeem it with all his patrimony. 'Twould grieve one, I confesse, that did but weigh this sin in this balance, and observe the Tekel in the wall over against it, how light and keyy and impertinent a sin this is, to heare that any body should be damned for it in another world, part with such treasures for such trifles, make such African voyages, carry out the substantiall commodities of a good land, and return with a freight of toies or monsters, pay so hugely dear for such perfect nothings; and yet 'twould grieve one more, that this sin should glitter in a Protestant Court, become part of the gallantry and civility of the place, I and defame and curse our Armies, that the improspersousnesse, ruine, perhaps *παρολεθρία*, of a whole Kingdome should be imputable to one such and all our prayers to Heaven for you, be outfounded and drowned with that most contrary eloquence. 'Twere the sin, justest thing in the world, that he, that upon my present instance, (this more then *δύοις ὑποκρίσει*, second admonition) will not now vow to part forever with this one sin, so threatfull to his Sovereigne, his Country, his own soul, to the hosts gone forth against the enemy, to all that is or should be precious to him, and so absolutely gainlesse to himself in his vilest capacity, even as a sensuall brute, should never be admitted within these dores againe, never be preached to more, never be considered a Christian so much as in profession, that will part with his true Christ or Jesus, rather then with the names of them to blaspheme by; That he should be delivered up to Satan, as the primitive Offenders were, *βασιλίζεσθαι*, to be corporally tormented by him, *ἐν δαδερὸν σαρκός*, to*

the tearing that foule tongue, that noysome piece of flesh out of his mouth, that by that means at least, *παιδεύειν καὶ βλασφημεῖν*, he may be disciplined or taught not to blaspheme.

Will you look into another sin (a time of humiliation may be an excuse for the digression) that of uncleanness, whether of the eye, the libidinous look, that men are so hardly perswaded to believe to be a sin, (*i. e.* in effect, that Christ forbade any thing under that phrase of *looking on a Woman to lust*) or whether that of the tongue that *eris stuprum*, unsavoury discourse, rotten, putrid, noysome conversation, which makes it so absurd for that man ever to pray, (to blesse God in the Church with that part that was so polluted in the Chamber) or whether the grosser sin, the making *members of Christ members of a Harlot*, (meant by the Apostle as an huge expression, members of a Swine, a Toad, had been nothing to it) what is this, but a *Barabbas* still, a Robber in competition with *Christ* for that body, which is, saith the Apostle, *for the Lord, and not for fornication*, 1 Cor. 6. 13. A vile infamous crime, that staies not for the most part for its hell, its punishment in another world, meets with its *Limbo*, its *Tophet* here, torments and curses enough in this life, if they might have leave to be considered.

'Tis worth observing in the New Testament, that the name of *Idolatry*, not often mentioned there, doth most times very probably denote this sin of *uncleanness* or *carnality*; the observation might be made good at large, if 'twere now seasonable, and I would to God my auditory would be perswaded, thus to *keep themselves from Idols*, to flie from this kind of idolatry, that mens natures have a thousand times more temptations to, then that other sin that bears the envy of all our misery, the *Idolatry* that the *sacrilegious* so declaim at: believe me, there is not a sinne more incompetent with the Gospel-mercy, a more unreconcilable rivall of all Godliness, a greater waster of conscience, griever and quencher of the Spirit, a more perfect piece of Atheisme, and Heathenisme, be it in the fairest outside Christian, nor withall greater blasting and curse to a Nation, an Army, a Garrison town, then the permission of this

this one sin, the voice of it crying to heaven, as loud as *Sodom for fire from Heaven*, for judgement upon the place. Remember the fierce judgement in *Shittim*, *Numb. 25.* upon the peoples joyning to *Reuel Peor*, that filthy heathenish Idol, expounded *ver. 1.* by comming whoredome with the daughters of *Moab*; the heads of the people, remember that, the heads of the people, the principall men in *Israel*, either because they were most guilty, or because the matter required such an expiation, must be *hang'd up against the Sun*, that the anger of the Lord might be turned away from *Israel*, (and I believe 'twould pose a man to give any reason why this sin (of adultery at least) in this Land, as well as *stealing* of a trifle, should not be awarded in the stile of that text with *hanging up against the sun*) and the command there is to them in place of judicature to see the execution of the Law against them, *Slay you every one his men, v. 5.* But this is a Judaicall outdated punishment among us, and it hath been the cunning of Satan that it should be so, who having prosper'd so far for his clients, would not be quiet till he had gotten al kind of restraint or discouragement of this sin to be so too, till he had made the souleste incurr a far cheaper sin and safer possession, then the practice of some Christian vertues; nay, which is observable to the lasting shame of this land, till the injured man thus despoiled and robbed by the adulterer, be made, by a kind of naturall custome, the onely infamous person, and the *Barabbas* that robbed him punish'd onely with that curse in the Gospel, of having *all men speak well of him*. O what is this, but as the Psalmist saith, *to blesse them whom God abhors*, or as the Prophet, *Mal. 3. 14.* *And now we call the proud, happy; and they that work wickednesse, are set up!* Believe it, One or two such ponderous guilts as these are able to keep the justest cause from bwoying up itself, and our ferventest prayers from their *πλουτίζουσι*, from working any saving miracles upon a land.

I wish there were now no more *Barrabbas's* amongst us, a canvassing against Christ, but I must not flatter you with so short a catalogue; Look on your indevotion, that heartlesse zeallesse behaviour in this very house of God. Your hearing, which is mostly the fairest part of you, what is it but as of a Rhetor at

a desk, to commend or dislike, the same which you have as well for the stage as the pulpit, a *plaudite* or an *bis*; and for that other of prayer, though it be for those blessings of peace, of safety, the *Shalom* that many men have more devotion for, then that other great sense of that word, the salvation of their souls, and which ardent prayer is the onely means to bring down upon us; yet what cold add resses, what wandring eyes and thoughts, what irreverent negligent motions, what yawning in stead of sighing out our parts of it, what absolute indifference, if God will take our own witnesse, whether we be heard or no? This want of aridency in us, this no fire on our Altar of incense, is certainly the thing that hath provoked God to deliver up our Liturgy to Satan, to oppose and maligne, to calumniat and defame as at this day; The Lord pardon us our part of this sin. This is the perfering of a *Barabbas* too, a Robber, a Devil perhaps, that steales away our hearts from Christ, even when we are in closest converse with him. As for *fasting*, what is that but on empty, formall, insignificant name? The scorn of the Pharisees twice a week, hath quite driven it out of our Calender. O consider this, and but once more consider, Look on the Sermon in the Mount, the severall graces and duties that there make up the Christiã somewhat above the pitch of a Scribe or Pharisee, and then every of the contrary vices, nay the very Jewish or Heathen, the morall or naturall mans vertues, that come short of that high Philosophy, are every one the *Barabbas* in the Text, directly this Jewish Choice; He that cannot forgive an enemy, blesse him, pray for him, heap all the hot burning coals of charity upon his head, and melt him by that artifice, rather then break him, ruine him, damn him by any other. what doth he but prefer his owne revengefull lust, that hellish piece of sensuality, that food for the Wolfe, the Vultur, the Salamander, the Devill in him directly before the commands, not onely counsels of Christ? and so *non hunc sed Barabbam*, a *Barabbas* is still the Choice, and the Christ the reprobate still, which brings me to the 3^d particular, the Choice it self, not onely preferring one before t^other, but 1. absolutely rejecting of one: and then 2. *ad evitandum vacuum*, to fill up the vacuity, pitching upon t^other, *non, sed, not this, but, &c.* And

And 1. absolutely *not this*, a downright reiterated *nolumus hunc*, most vehement dislikes to Christ as soon as ever he is mentioned: the Jewes had particular quarrels to him, *ἰσχυροὶ δακνόντες*, they were many times scandalized at him, but not they onely, but it seems we Gentiles too, the *naturall man receives not the things of the Spirit*, whether the graces or the promises, *ὁ σὰρκαὶ*, he receives them not, not onely that he cannot attain to them for that is said in the latter words, *neither can he know them*, but *ὁ σὰρκαὶ*, he receives them not, will not accept them when they are offered, for they are *foolishnesse to him*, not worth taking up in the streets, he cannot stoop to such trifles; and in another place the same Apostle saith it of Christ crucified, *To the Jewes a stumbling block, and to the Gentiles foolishnesse*; the things of the spirit are foolishnesse, and the Christ foolishnesse too, we not onely not chuse him, when any other comes in competition with him, but not take him when none; An antipathy to Christ, an absolute adversion, rejection of such merchandise, though there were no price to be paid for them. This is a mystery of hell, let us view it a while, and to that end consider Christ, in the two main parts of him, in which he shines most illustrious towards us, His *graces* and his *promises*, the diet all the yeare long for his servants, and the wages at the end of his service; the *viaticum* he affords in the voyage, and the reward in the haven.

For the former of these, for *grace*, the Bridegrooms feast, *Luke 14.* which so many were bid to, see there what difficulty there is to bring men to it, not one comes on the first invitation, though it seems all were really expected, and the entertainment provided; when all is ready, the servants are again sent out to tell them, they are staid for, and the issue is; *they all with one consent began to make excuses*, the feast was ready, grace ready to be spoyld for want of guests, and yet neither civility nor pity, nor common gratitude can work up to them, or extort the acceptance of such a donative; *The field, the Oxen, the Wife*, are like the *Barabbas* here, not the excuses of their contempt, pretences onely and opportunities of getting off more cleanly, from Christ; and if you marke it, so it is. There's nothing that we have learned so perfect from *Adam* as that art of excu-

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fes; and withall, nothing that we so vehemently desire to be
 excused from, as the power of grace, when it makes toward
 our souls, when by the preaching of the word powerfully
 applied, with an [*Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead*]
 and [*O consider this ye that forget God, lest he teare you in pieces*], and
 [*Behold ye despisers, and wonder, and perish:*] when by the message
 of that Angel come up close to us, the Holy Ghost begins to
 overshadow and beget Christ in us, that procreative light of
 Heaven darting its beams, and those attended with some con-
 ceptions of holinesse in a carnall breast, O how uneasie we
 are, how incombred, till we can get rid of this burthen, like so
 many harlots that live by the trade of not conceiving, or when
 that will not be done, force an abortion if it be possible: we must
 be excused from that austerity, we are impatient of being so
 attenuated, and spiritualized, wrackt, though it be but from
 our lees; the last flash of the candle, pangs of the expiring soule
 are time enough for this bearing fruit unto God. Lord make
 us chaste, make us sober, make us humble then, *let me die the*
death of the righteous, and my last end be like his, let me
 have a show'r of sanctity, a Clinicks baptisme, some good
 wholsome wishes, or ejaculations to bath me before my last
 journey, an *Elias's* fiery Chariot of zeale then to hurry me to
 Heaven, *sed noli modo*, Lord none of this purity yet, the
εισδυσεις εντα ελν ψυχη, in *Eunapius*, the danger of being all soule,
 all holinesse, and heavenly mindedness so early, is a sad fright-
 full thing for a young Courtier, a young Souldier, a young
 Academick, for any that are under the age, or not come to the
 infirmities of the *Clinici* in the Primitive Church, (those that
 would not be Baptized till they were ready to die, and so were
 literally *βαπτιζομενοι ενδε νεκρον*, baptized for dead, then and
 not till then desired to be baptized.) Holinesse is a dull me-
 lancholy thing, fit onely for a *hypochondriack* to be entertained
 with. Thus when the crest-faln Israelites were to be redeemed
 from an *Aegypt* to a *Canaan*, they crie out upon *Moses* and *Aaron*,
Exod. 5. chide with their Saviours, abomin their Deliverers;
 thus the harraft degenerate emasculate slave is offended with a
Jubilee, a manumission, servitude is his sensuality, he will not
 goe out free, brings his eare to his Master and desires to be *bored*
 thorow

thorow it, that he may be a slave for ever. Once more, thus the man possessed with no lesse then a legion of Devills, casting him sometime into the fire, sometime into the water, tearing him till he foareth again, is passionately faine in love with that legion, hath not the patience to be rid of these Devills; when Christ comes to cast them out, he is most out of charity with that Christ, *τι ποιεῖς σοι; what have I to doe with thee?* not thou Devil that hast tormented me all this while, but thou Jesus the eternall Son, or thou Piety the precious grace of G:d, art thou come to torment, i. e. to sanctifie or dispossesse me before my time? torment me by delivering me from the Tormentor, disease by curing, poyson me by thy balm or balsome, wound me by thy mollifying plaisters, condemn me to Hell by bringing me into a sight of Heaven? thus when the Beloved comes and knocks at the dore of the espoused soule, *Open to me my sister, my love*, and there waits without dores most unseasonably and beyond all patience, till his head be fill'd with the dew, and his locks with the drops of the night, all the answer that is to be had is no more but this, *I have put off my coat, how can I put it on? I have wash'd my feet, how shall I defile them? I have put off righteousness like a garment*, denuded myself of all that looks like holinesse, and all the wooings of the true-beloved cannot give me patience to put it on again, I have wash'd my feet in mire or ink, douz'd my carnall affections in all the vilenesse in the world, and how shall I defile them with grace, pollute them with chastity, defame or profane them with any thoughts of holinesse? thus doth the swine wash her selfe in the mire, and he that comes to cleanse defiles her; the sinner never so well pleased as when he is given up to all vile affections, the offers of Christ, the importunities of grace go for the onely oppression and usurpation, and tyranny in the world, and so *non hunc*, not this man, not Christ, as Christ signifies grace, that inchoation of Sanctity that hee came to bring among us.

And *non hunc* again, as that signifies the promises which Christ brought with him, though those promises be of all that is valuable to immortal souls, of nothing but heaven and blisse, *non hunc*, none of Christ when he comes but a Herald of these. For even against this, we have two dislikes.

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1. This

1. This blisse is of a new spirituall making, (and that is one reason why we despise the promises) consists in the vision of God, contemplation of heavenly excellencies, nothing of the Turkish carnall paradise in it, nothing that this flesh and blood, the habituall sinner can tell what to make of. I remember *Philoponus* his conceit, that to have a right apprehension of God, 'twas necessary to study the *Mathematicks*; Men naturally cannot understand any thing but by phantasmes, and those still mixing in the contemplation of God, make men fancy God μεθ' ὧν, with matter and corpulency; and the *Mathematicks* are a necessary means to help us to abstract from that. I would to God we had some such engine, or crain, or pullie to elevate our fancies, to make it possible to think any thing pleasure which is not corpulent and carnall. A madnesse, beleeve it, that wee wrong the *Epicureans* to think any of that ancient Sect was ever guilty of it; No, they could please themselves with spirituall beauty, as far as they apprehended there was any; witness *Epicurus* himself, who though he were under those pains of strangury and dysentery that were not capable of increase, of which, it seems by *Laertius*, he died, yet, saith he, in his Will, ἀντιπαρτάμετο πᾶσι ταῖς τῷ καὶ ψυχῇ χαίρειν, the joy of his soul was able to hold out against all these: Onely the Mahometan, and the carnall Christian, is the true *Epicurean* swine that *Horace* prophesied of, that can find no pleasure, but in the mire and dung-hill, and that's one main reason of the non bunc, as he refers to promises; because they are celestiaall invisible felicities that he cannot find any juice or taste in.

But besides that, there is another reason of it, another objection the carnal Jew-Christian hath to those promises, because indeed they are but promises, because of the futurity of them; he is a man of sense, and not of faith, *filius huius seculi*, all for present possessions, nothing for advowsons and reverfions. *Ephraim* is like the Heifer, saith the Prophet, that loveth to tread out the corn, the reason of that love was because of that law, that the mouth of the Oxe or Heifer must not be muzzle'd at that time; she is allow'd to eat at the instant that she doth the work, is not put off to so long a date, so tedious an expectation of sweating here, and being fed and rewarded in another life, and that made

*Præfat. in lib.
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p. 721.*

made Ephraim love to toy! so well. A little present payment will goe farther with her, then the richest most glorious futurity; Poor short-sighted creatures! who cannot see a hand-bredth before us, like *Socinus*, huge enemies of prescience, will not allow it possible for God himself to see any future, farther then he hath decreed and determined it. For God to know, or us to beleieve any thing but what is before us, is a prodigy that carnal reason cannot consent to; and so you see the grounds of the [*non hunc*] the no Christ absolutely at a venture, because there is nothing in him to be esteemed, neither form, nor comeliness, no carnall or present beauty, that we should desire him, *Isa.* 53. 2. and therefore it follows, he is despised, and rejected of men: *non nunc*, not this man.

But then this is not all; The disaffection to Christ is so great, that rather then have him, the *Barabbas* shall be releas'd: *this*, you are mistaken, if you think any large expression to *Barabbas*, they could value their own lives better, then to desire impunity for Murderers. The short is, they are so bent against Christ, that seeing there is a necessity of choosing one for release, of sacrificing some part of their malice and revenge to their present festivity, they will part with any the most reasonable part of it, rather then that was pitch'd on Christ. *Barabbas* was a notorious Prisoner, one that had troubled the whole City, and every mans appetite was up to have *Barabbas* crucified, and yet rather then *Jesus* shall live, *Barabbas* shall not be crucified, more insurrections, more blood, more seditions, more any thing, rather then be in danger to have Christ for their King. You may see it in *St. Peters* meditation upon that part of the story, *Act.* 3. 14. *But ye denyed the holy One, and the just, and desired a Murderer to be given unto you, and killed the Prince of life: the holy One, the just, the Prince of life, holynesse, justice, life it selfe, are things not to be endured, to bee hunted, pursued, driven out of the world, and in comparison with them, the Murderer turns St. the most abhorred sin^r shall passe for most desirable rarities, Apollyon the onely friend, and Hell it self the vastest preferment.*

You see from hence, that we may draw toward a conclusion, What hath help'd *Barabbas* to his favour, what 'tis that hath brought

brought most of the sins of the world into fashion among men? not any thing esteemable or desireable in themselves, no not so much as to flesh and blood, till a habit and custome hath smoothed them to our throats, sweetned them to our palates, disguised their horror, and given us some tolerable pleasure in them. Beleeve it, there are few sins but ingenuous nature, when once the fury of youth is over, hath sufficient dislikes unto, that *σήμερον* *λόγος*, the light of natural conscience, that *ὅρκος* *ἐνίσταται* *αὐτῷ* *τοῖς* *λογισμοῖς* *γένεσι*, in Hierocles, *ἐπαγγελία* *ἀνθρώπου*, in Arrians stile, that oath or promise, that sacrament in the mothers wombe that every man takes to God, when he hath first leave to become a man, can help us to hate them perfectly. *Exemplo quodcunque malum committitur, ipsi displicet*: that one auxiliary in our breasts is abundantly able to fortifie against them, so far, that the man shall say really and in sobriety, *he hath no pleasure in them*; but then in many others there is a keen tooth, a stinging tail over and above the no pleasure, many *tormina* and twinges super-added: the Drunkard that follows that trade of bestiality most close, finds it a very painfull joylesse calling, I will reveal the secret of his confession, though he fall into it oft, he hath no pleasure in it, no joy in those daily vomits, were they not physick against something else, against that burthen of time that lies so unsupportable upon his hands, against melancholly, against pangs and twinges of conscience, like Cain's building of Cities, and his Children inventing of Musick, that the noise of the Hammers and the melody of the Instruments might out-found the din within him, or at least to take up quarter before Christ, to help stop the ear from that *ἡρέμα* *σαλπίζε*, that still whispering trumpet in Appian, fit for the secret invasion of the soul, to keep him from the pain, or perhaps the reproach of being too precise: and most other sins are of the like making, we flie to them as to our refuge to save us from Christ, as the horns of our Altar to keep us from that *Goel* which wee dread, as the Revenger of blood, our onely enemy and persecutor in the world. 'Tis not any prime quality, any special excellency we find in our carnall entertainments (those not onely *vanities* but *vexations*, not onely unsatisfying, but wounding acquisitions, those gainlesse torments, those painted flies, with barbed hooks

hooks under them) that makes us so passionately dote upon them, (the Jews were not in love with *Barabbas*) but onely our prejudices to Christ, our vehement dislikes to holinesse, our impatience of any thing that may do us good, our league with perdition, our covenant with death, our zeal to hell, and absolute resolvednesse to be miserable eternally.

Such malice hath every sinner to his own soul, such hating to be reformed, that the painfull'st uneasiest sin, the most prodigal expenceful lust, a very *Sodome* of filth-and burning, not onely the sins of *Sodome*, but the fire and brimstone rain'd down and mixt with the sins, gotten into their composition, shal be abundant pleasure and Epicurisme to him, that hath found no other stay to his appetite. I appeal to your own consciences, whether many of you have not suffer'd more hardshipp in Satans service, then any man hath in Gods? whether your very sins have not cost you dearer, then ever any Martyr paid to get to heaven? Tel me, hath not your lusts had martyrs of you, many passed thorow the fire to *Moloch*? hath not your ambition had martyrs of you, many a base submission, a toylsome pluck, a climbing or crawling up that hil of honor? Beleeve it, the Poet jeer'd you in that not truth but irony, that sarcasme and bitter taunt against you, *facilis descensus Averni*, the descent to hell is an easie passage; If he spake what he thought, I am confident you can give him the lie, produce your selves so many visible demonstrations of the contrary truth, that you can shew himby your scars as 'twere, by the halfe-moon in your breasts, what a tyrannicall, Turkish task-master Satan hath been to you. 'Tis an ordinary passage in the story of *Julian*, that when he received his deaths wound, he fell a railing at Christ; but *Philostorgius* seems to rectifie the story, tels us, it was his owne Gods, *i. e.* Devils that he rail'd at, that he took his blood in his hand out of his wound, and cast it against the Sun, his desired Idol, with a *κατέδαπτε*, be thou satisfied; yea, and call'd the rest of his many Gods, saith he, *καὶ ἐς τὰς ἄλλας* (so the Manuscript hath it) evil and execrable persons, *τὰς αὐτῷ θεοὺς καταλογίζων*, cursing and declaiming at his own Gods, and not at Christ: the application is plain, the Devil he is the bloody Master, his is the course service, and sad wages, not Christs; none is so fit to be

curst by his owne Clients as that Prince of Darknesse, *αρχὴν τῶν ὀμίλων*, the Monarch Ruler of this Age of ours. I have reason to beleeve there are no fitter Judges to appeal to in this particular then my present auditory. 'Twas a French Friers conceit, that Courtiers were of all men the likelyest to bear him company to his Covent, not onely fittest, but likelyest to forsake the world, and turn Penitenteries. He judg'd it, because such an one of all others had most reason to be displeased with the pleasures of the world, he hath seen to the bottome of sensual delights, found the emptynesse and torments of those things, which the distance and ignorance that other men are kept at, makes them behold with reverence and appetite; the Courtier hath made the experiment, and sees how strangely the world is mistaken in its admired delights, and with *Solomon*, after a glut of vexatious nothings, is now fit to turn *Ecclesiastes*, or Preacher. I wish you would be but at so much leifure, as to think of the Friers meditation, that you would try what mortifying Sermons you could make out of your own observati-
ons, concerning the vanity of sensual miscalled pleasures. I am confident you would be very eloquent, able to outpreach all the Orators you ever heard from the Pulpit, to write more patheticall descriptions of the madnesse of a carnal life, then from any more innocent Speculator could be hoped for. That you may begin that useful, edifying, lasting Sermon, I shal close up mine, having at length run thorow the particulars of my Text, shewed you your selves in the Jewish glasse, if it were possible to put you out of countenance, to shake you out of all tolerable good opinion of your selves: And now let every man go home with a [*tu es homo*] he is the very Jew I have preach'd of all this while. O that he would think fit to hate that Jew, humble him, labour his conversion, *bring him down into the dust, if so be there may yet be hope*: And that God that can bring from the dust of death again, open this dore to us a forlorn destitute people! so shal we see and praise the power and seasonable bounty of our Deliverer, and ascribe unto him (as our onely tribute) the honor, the glory, the power, the praise, the might, the majesty, the dominion, which through all the Ages of the world have been given to him that sitteth on the Throne, to the holy Spirit, and to the Lamb for evermore. Amen.

St.



St. Paul's Sermon to *Felix*.

The VIII. being a *Lent Sermon*

At OXFORD, *An. Dom.* 1645.

ACTS 24. 25.

And as he reasoned of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.

THe Words are the Notes taken from a Sermon of St. Pauls; And the successe it met with among the Auditors, the trembling of one Heathen Officer that was at it, is intirely the consideration that commended it to me at this time, in hope it might help to perform that strange work, beget a spiritual pallie or soul-quake in the Christian sinner, that worser kind of Heathen at the repetition.

There's matter enough, God knows, of trembling abroad, (though there were never a *judgment to come*) to put us all into

Belsbaz.

Belshazzars paralytick posture (the countenance changed, the thoughts troubled, the joynts of the loyns loosed, and the knees smiting against one another) and we bear it with a strange constancy, continue stil in as perfect an unconcern'd tranquillity, as if 'twere but a Scene, a Romance, a News from *Germany* all this while; the *Jonas* that is gone down to sleep in the sides of the Ship, and is the cause of all this tempest, must not be awaked after all these billows, our kethargick habits of sin not disturbed, onely a few cowardly Mariners may be allowed to pray every man to his God, and that's the utmost that all these prodigies of vengeance can extort from us.

You will therefore give me leave to count it a prize, that I have here found a clap of thunder, that could awake somebody, a Sermon that set one *Felix* a trembling, I should be too happy, if the repeating of it might have the same effect here present. *And as he reasoned of, &c.*

In the Words I shall but observe,

1. The matter of *St. Paul's* Sermon, *righteousnesse, and temperance, and judgment to come.*

And 2. the form of it by way of reasoning. As for the trembling, that must be Gods work on you while I treat of these.

The matter I must consider, 1. Absolutely, then as it is here clothed in a double relation, 1. To the Text on which 'twas preach'd, and that you shall see in the *verse* precedent, to be the Faith of Christ. 2. In relation to the prime Auditor, *Felix*, whether, as an Officer of *Cæsars*, or as a *Heathen*, or as one peculiarly guilty of these sins, to which the discourse is accommodated.

I begin first with the matter, consider'd absolutely, *righteousnesse, &c.*

Three grand particulars, which though they are common places, and vulgar themes, may yet have leave to give you advertisement a while.

The *Discourse*, whether justice, or righteousness in the front, (if you had the Fathers with, to see and hear *St. Paul* in the Pulpit, a pressing at large what you have here onely in brachygraphy) would look very sternly upon the most unrighteous oppressions of the many; that trade of subtilty and intricacy, that hath gotten the inclosure of all, not onely the wealth and greatness

greatness of the world, but of the credit also, the reputation of *wisdom*, yea and of *virtue* too; the onely honorable handsome quality, that all our respects and estimations are paid to; that new body of morality, that in stead of the old out-dated despised rules of justice and uprightness, hath set up that one beloved law of self-preservation, (that other *Antiphron* in the Rhetoricks that aiwaies seeth his own picture before him, and if health, or security may be acquired, can say to himself, as *Paracelsus* to his scrupulous Patient, if the cure be wrought, what matter is it whether it be by God, or the Devil?) in stead of the comfort of a pure immaculate conscience, the pleasure and satisfaction of having out-witted and over-reach'd our Brethren; the joy and ravishment, the high taste and sensuality, as it were, of an indirect action, being to him far above the advantage and gain of it; and either of them able to outweigh the mystery of Godliness, the (whether conscience, or) reward of blamelesse soules.

O! 'tis a fatall character of an accursed rebellious people, when in the Prophets stile, *he that abstaineth from evill maketh himself a prey*, when all those generous Christian vertues of meeknesse, and innocence, and charity, and not retaliating to enemies, shall become both undoing and scandalous qualities, a lawfull prize for every Harpy to seize on, and *ex abundanti*, over and above, matter of contumely and reproach to any that shal have so learn'd to be *fools of Christ*.

And it were a glorious and a royal design, worthy the gallantry of this congregation, & that which would bring Christianity into some credit in the Heathen world, would give us more hope of Proselytes from thence, then the Apostle of the Indies (*Xaverius* with his double Gospel; one of *Christ*, the other of *St. Peter*) ever brought back his Masters; if sincerity, and uprightness, and dove-like innocence, (those good natured rarities that our Saviour could not behold without loving the owner of them, although he were no Christian, *Mar. 10. 21.*) might be brought in fashion in a Court, or Kingdome; if oppression and the grosser acts of piracy might be driven out like Wolves, and Bears, and bears of prey; and disguises, and crafts, and cheats, and all kind of artifices and stratagems, have as many

ny names of vermin allotted to them, and all in one herd pursued, and hounded out of the world; if the examples of a *Jacob*, a *David*, a *Nathaniel*, a *Christ*, might be permitted to rescue the guileless heart and lips (at least) from reproach, and scorne, if not from the vultures talons, if it might be esteemed but as infamous and vile to act, as 'tis to suffer injuries, as ungentlemanly a thing to thrive by fraud, as to perish by good conscience. And till this be set a foot among us (this that an heathen *Socrates* would, if he were alive again, venture another martyrdom to replant among his *Athenians*) may this first point of St. Pauls Sermon be forever a ringing in your eares, *μετ' ἀγαθοσύνης*, of righteousness, and a thundering judgment to come for all those that are not edified by that doctrine.

2. For *Temperance*, or, as the word *ἐγκράτεια*, both here and * 1 Cor. 9. 25. *elsewhere* more properly signifies *Continence*, and command of passions and lusts, the *τὸ ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἔχειν*, the mastery over a mans self: & Ignat. ad *Philip*. *ὁπὸς ἀνενήν*
*ἢ ἐμμε-
τρωνται.*
speaking of
men and wo-
men.
One cannot in charity to Christendome but stay upon it a while, and recommend it to mens favour, so far at the least, that it may find the ordinary justice, to be preferred (in their judgments, if not their passions) before bestiality and villany, before the *ἄπια πάθη*, the infamous affections which nature it self hath reproach'd and branded, that the preserving our bodies the temples of the Holy Ghost, may be but as creditable a thing; as any of those *μεσσημερία διαμόναι*, noon-day Devils, in Gregentius phrase, those impudencies that have put off the veil, that are become so daring and confident, fornication, adultery, uncleanness, i. e. in the New Testament dialect, *ἀδελμοὶ εἰδωλολατρίαι*, outlared abominable idolatries; that chastity may be kept in some countenance, not passe either for such a strange, or such a ridiculous, such an impossible, or such a scandalous rarity.

Beloved, there was once a piece of Discipline in the Church of God, of sending the Devil into such swine, of delivering up the incontinent to Satans smart, his real corporeal stripes, and inflictions in the Apostles age; and after this smart was commuted for shame, casting them out of the Church, out of the society of all civil men, *ἵνα ἐσθραπῶσι*, that they might be ashamed.

It seems it was then a more fashionable creditable thing to be a praying in the Church, then a dallying in the Chamber;
Continence

Continence was recommended to Christians, not onely among the *σενα & ἀγνά*, the venerable and the pure, but the *μελοπία & εὐσημία*, lovely and commendable, Phil. 4. Embraced by men of quality upon the same motives, on which now all the contrary vices are taken up, in adoration to that great Idol, *Civility and reputation*; Virtue was then the more splendid title, the more courtly name; And 'tis none of the meanest sins and plagues, provocations and vengeance of this Kingdome, that the measure of honor and gallantry among us is taken from fools and mad-men, and by that means shame so prodigiously transplanted; The chaste man is the only leaper to be separated and thrust out from the Camp, *Modesty* the onely scandalous thing; the three degrees of the new-fashioned Excommunication are denounced and executed, like the Athenian Ostracism, upon the severall gradations of that vertue; The purity of the Body, the Tongue, the Eye, have a kind of *Nidui*, and *Cherem* and *Scamatha* proportioned to them, no man is civill enough for ordinary converse, til he hath renounced such pusillanimous innocencies, and brought forth fruits worthy of that repentance, a whole Knight-errantry in that sin, *confession with the mouth*, glorying of their masculine enterprizes, (enough to fill a Romance) and even *martyrdome* it self, and many sad encounters, and real hellish sufferings in that service, and all this penance, of the least to expiate the crime of bashfulness, to reconcile the modest Puny, to make him fit for society with men.

I remember a conceit of *Herodotus*, when the *Greeks* besieged *Troy*, he believes *Helena* was in *Egypt*, because otherwise had she been in the City, they would certainly have deliver'd her up, and saved themselves: so strange did it seem to him and irrati-onall, that men should choose rather to die then part with a lust. And yet to the shame of us Christians, when Gods judgments make such direful approaches to us on this great quarrell for our vile, and reproachful lusts, when a black grim cloud hangs just over our heads, gather'd from the vapors, which this one dung-hil hath exhaled, (as *Rome*, they say, and others as well as that, is enabled to oppress Countreys by the Pensions it receives from them) when the voyce is come flashing out of that cloud, and the businesse driven to a close issue, *repent* or

perish irreverſibly, (the kingdome uſed by God at this time, as *Antiochus* of old by the Romane Ambaſſadors, put into a circle, as it were, and not ſuffered to come out till we ſhall give our answer) we deſert and renounce eſtates and lives, honors, and ſouls and all, rather then retrench or abate ought of this accuſed ſuperfluity.

And to this unfavoury humour and cuſtome of the world, one uſe may be brought home from St. Pauls Sermon, though taken in cypher, *μετ' ἐγκράτειας*, of *Continence*, I beſeech you ſave me the pains, reſume and enlarge it your ſelves.

3. For judgment to come, 1. That there is ſuch a thing. 2. That it deſcends to ſuch mean particulars as *juſtice*, and *continence*, I cannot but in paſſing be your Remembrancer.

1. That here is ſuch a thing.

Injuſtice and *incontinence* are two main ſupplanters of all belief of the judgment to come, when a man hath once ſet up that infamous trade of the *βυλῆδωροι πλετῆν*, 1 Tim. 6. of *reſolving to be rich*, in ſpight of all thoſe objections, and ſtops, and encumbrances of honeſty and direct dealing, when he is come to a contemning that pedantry of juſtice, of obſervation of Oaths, that ſhall interpoſe ſo unciſſily to reſiſt his thrift and advancement in the world, beleve it, the *mine vatum*, the newes of the judgment to come, in the Preachers mouth, wil bee under an heavy ſuſpicion of fraud and cheat, and in fine paſſe but for fictions and *mormo's*, too weak to outlook a brave glittering temptation: The Taxes on the Eccleſiaſtickſ in *Florence*, which no body elſe dare collect for feare of the Popes thunderbolts; the *Jews* wil exact undauntedly. Now the covetous worldling is that Jew, whoſe ſoul being gone down into the bowells of the earth, *ὅτι πῶς τὸ χρῶς μεταλλάσσειν*, in *Diodorus* his phraſe, to an eternall drudgery in the gold-minerall, is out of the reach of ſounds from Heaven, out of the awe, or noiſe of thunderbolts. The Mammonift is in your danger, at your mercy to turn Atheiſt, whenſoever you bid him, whenſoever the lure of Gold ſhall be at leiſure to tempt him, ready to renounce all hope, all fear of another world, whenſoever your goods are ſo put with in his reach, that an eaſie perjury wil bring them into his Inventory.

And

And for the lusts of the flesh, 'twas *Aristotle's* observation, that they are *φθαρτικὰ τῷ ἀνδρὶ*, they debauch and corrupt our principles; they send up more heathen fumes into the brain, then any other distemper can doe. Saint *Cyril* tells us of some Idolaters, that would have onely a day-God, because the night was a time for revelling, and to have a God then would destroy their game, and therefore they pitched upon the Sun; *ἵνα καὶ τὸ νυκτὸς καμὲν ἀθεοὶ μὴ ᾖσι*, that they might be Atheists all night, and then they take it out to purpose, *ἀμνηστικοὶ τοῦ ἡμέραν*, (as Saint *Basil* saith of the Gluttons fasts) revenging themselves on their day-Devotions by their Night-revels, never acknowledge a God, when a lust is to be lost by it: and *Athenagoras* hath given it for a rule, that the denying of the Resurrection, the resolved concluding the world with this life, and believing nothing of another, is the *κοινὸν δόγμα, καὶ νόμος ἀνοήτοις καὶ ἀπίστοις* *φίλῳ*, the onely beloved doctrine of the voluptuous. He that hath once transformed himselfe into that swine, hath his Optick Nerves so chang'd in his forehead, that (as *Plut.* observes of that creature) he never sees Heaven again, till he be laid on his back. And I feare the race of such heathen swine, is likely within a while to prove the prime staple commodity of the land.

We are fallen into peevish times, wherein all Gods methods are quite perverted; the powerfull 't meanes that were ever afforded for the casting such Devils out of a Kingdome, are debauched into matter of improvement and heightning of the humour, and even dethroning God, if he will not comply with it; the very Angels that came to *Sodom* to visit for villany, are once more assaulted and violated by our lusts; I meane those judgements from Heaven upon a vicious Generation, that would have inspired a Colony of Scythians with some piety, by a strange kind of *antiperistasis*, or contrary working, have made men more profane, and godlesse, then ever they were before; the storme so close over our heads, that in other Kingdomes they say sets them a ringing Bells, shooting Guns, lifting up voices to break and dissolve the cloud that threatens them, hath set us upon the same designe by oathes and blasphemies, and those accursed *καλέσματα*, the shouts of our Souldi-

ers, have broke the cloud indeed, brought downe (not the Dove flying over our heads, as Historians tell us, a shout in an Army once did, and an army of united prayers may doe so againe, but) the Eagle to a Carcasse, the Night-raven to the funerall of a consumptive Church and Monarchy; an hell from heaven upon an abominable people.

Αγαθόν ἐστι πολλά παθόν ἢ σωφρονίζεσθαι, could the Tyrant Phalaris say, He that is not made sober by many sufferings, is absolutely insensate; And yet God knows, out of this rock the greatest part of this age seems to be hewed: The thunder about our eares that could teach the most barbarous Nations to believe and tremble, the breaking in of the *lyons* that disciplin'd the Assyrians in *Samaria* to seek out instruction in the manner of the God of the land, 2 King. 17. Gods using us as the Physitian in the Epigram did the Lethargick Patient, putting a Lunatick into the same roome with him, to drie-beat us, if possible, into sense and life again: His proceeding to that great cure of the λύσις ἐξιν, dissolving the habit of the body politick, and to that end, letting bloud to a *deliquium*, which Hippocrates resolves so necessary to abate the ἡ ἐν ἀρεσιν ἰσχυρία, the high, full, athletick health, that is so dangerous in his Aphorisms, The driving out into the field with *Nebuchadnezzar*, which infused reason into that λυσιθεωρον, which untransformed him againe, and raised up his eyes to an acknowledgment of him that liveth forever, Dan. 4. have, God knows, wrought the quite contrary on us, wasted the seeds of naturall piety within us, erected Academies of Atheisme, endowed them with Schools and Professors, where the art of it may be learned at a reasonable rate; a young sinner of an ordinary capacity may within a few months observation set up Atheist for himself, prophane, scoffe at the Clergy, be very keen and witty upon Scripture, have exceptions against the Service of the Church, and all with as good grace as if he had served an Apprentiship in *Italy*; or at the feet of that great Master, that Martyr of Atheisme, *Vanninus*.

He that at the breaking in of this torrent of misery upon the land, had but walk'd in the counsell of the ungodly, was but upon probation & deliberation whether he should be wicked or no, that

that after some months, when the waters began to turne into bloud, was yet advanced to a moderate proficiency, a *standing in the way of sinners*, and found it but an uneasie wearisome posture, a standing upon thornes and flints, is now fairely sate down in the chaire of the Scorne, or prophane Atheist, in *cathedra*, as a place of ease or repose, can blaspheme without any regrets of a petulant conscience; in *cathedra* as a seat of state, prophanes with a better grace then he can doe any thing else, is become a considerable person upon that one account, is valued among Lookers on by that only excellency; and in *cathedra* againe, as a Professors chaire, a Doctour of that black faculty, ready to entertaine Clients, to gather Disciples, to set up an Independent Church of rational Blasphemers, and (being himself a compleate Convert, sufficiently approved to Satan) to confirm and strengthen those puny Brethren, that are not arrived to the accursed measure of that fulnesse, fit them with *Machiavels* capacity for vast undertakings by that excellent quality of being wicked enough, the want of which, saith he, hath been the undoing of the world. *And shall not God visit for this, shall he not be avenged on such a Nation as this? A wonderfull and horrible thing is wrought in the land,* the judgments that were sent to awake, have nummed and petrified us, the fire in the bowels of this earth of ours hath turned us into perfect quarry and mine, and, as *Diodorus* tells us, in *Arabia* the Ice and Cry stall is congeald *καὶ διὰ τοῦ πύρος δύναμεως, ὡς καὶ ὁ ὕψος*, by the power of divine fire, and not by cold: so are these icy cry stall hearts of ours frozen by that fire from heaven, that shall one day set the whole universe melting.

But besides these Atheists of the first magnitude, other inferiour Pretenders there are, that cannot shake off all apprehensions of all judgment to come, but yet upon distant tamer principles, can do Satans businesse as well; for such trifles as this Text takes notice of; the contraries to *justice* and *continence*, they have an *ἀπολύτρωσις*, like *Marcus* in *Iren*: that charmed shield from the Mother of the Gods, which shal render them *ἀόρατοι πρὸς κριτῆν*, invisible to the Judge; the judicature erected by Christ takes not cognizance of such morall breaches as these, there nothing but infidelity proves capitall, or if the breaches of the first Table,

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ble may be brought in collaterally under that head, yet for these veniall defaultances against the Second, this toy of circumventing our Brethren, of *defiling the flesh*, (as it's consequent in *S. Jude, speaking evil of dignities*) Christ came to make expiation for such, not to receive bills of indictment against them, to be their Priest, but not their Judge. I remember a saying of *Picus Mir.* that a speculative Atheist is the greatest monster but one, and that is the practical Atheist. And yet this is the darling of the carnal Fiduciaries, that can help him to reconcile his grossest sins, his anything with faith. How wel, you wil have leisure to see, if you please to descend with me from the absolute to the relative view of the matter of *St. Paul's Sermon*, and consider first the relation which it hath to the Text on which hee preached it, and that you shall see in the former *verse*, *μετ' ἡμῶν ἦν Χριστὸς ἡμῶν*, concerning the *faith on Christ*, and that is my next stage.

Ἡ εἰς Χριστὸν πίστις, the *Faith on Christ*, the phrase that some nice Observers have laid such weight on, to denote the special act of *justifying faith*, as 'tis an affiance on Christ; of a far higher pitch, then either the believing Christ, or believing in Christ; and yet it seems, those so despicable moral virtues, (those that so few think necessary, and some have affirmed, destructive and pernicious to salvation) are here brought in by *St. Paul* (I hope not impertinently) under this head, *Justice, and continence, and judgment to come*, parts of a Sermon of the *faith on Christ*.

So, *1 Cor.* where *St. Paul* had fastened his determination, *ch. 2.* to know nothing among them but *Jesus Christ*, and him crucified; in the very next *chap.* he chargeth them with sins of carnality, *strife, envyings, factions*; in the *5.* with *fornication* or incest; in the *6.* with *going to law before Infidels*: all these it seems the prime contrarieties to the *faith or knowledge of the crucified Saviour*. Thus in *St. James*, you may mark that *works of charity and mercy* are call'd *ἡ ἀγαθή, ἡ ἡλικία, ἡ ῥησέως, ἡ ἡλικία*, *Religion, ch. 1. 27.* and being authorized from such great Apostles, I shall not fear to tell you, that the prime part of the knowledge, and faith, and religion of Christ, the life and power of Christianity, is the setting up and reigning of these virtues in our hearts: you may see it, *Tit. 2. 11.* *The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, Χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ σωτηρία, the Catholick salvick grace, be it Christ himself,*

himself, or the Gospel of Christ; and the end of this Epiphany follows, *παιδείῃς*, to discipline, or to teach us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously, the very virtues in this Text, with the addition of one transcendent one, and godly in this present world : A strange catalogue of fundamentals one would think for Christ to ascend the cross to preach unto us ; We expect other manner of doctrines from him, doctrines of liberty, Jubilee and manumission, (as the merit and acquisition of his sufferings) of security and protection from sin, that a little carnality shal not hurt us, of freeing us from this bondage to obediences, 'at least, from any judgment to come, for such errors as these, that flesh and blood makes so necessary and incorrigible : We have generally a smother scheme of Christianity then *Salvian* dream'd of, in his [*quid est fides, nisi præceptis Christi obedire ?*] what is faith, but obedience to the commands of Christ ? The necessity of purifying, or mortifying of lusts, goes for an heresie of this nicer Age, which must superadde works to faith, our own obedience to the righteousness of Christ, and so in *Simon Magus* his phrase, *homines in servitutem redigere*, make slaves of free-born men, have them live as well, as if Christ had never dyed for them.

The truth is, the doctrine we have now in hand, if believed and obey'd, is so certainly destructive of the Devils kingdom (and none other so certain but this) that you cannot blame Satan and his instruments to cry it down as the vilest heresie in the world.

He may hope for some tolerable quarter from any other principles, especially from those of the Solifidian and Fiduciary, brave, delicate, inoffensive doctrines, that have nothing in them contrary to passions, and that gets them such zealous Advocates, for by this divinity they have their lusts. And though it pleases God, by the power of his Grace to preserve some men, that have imbibed these principles from those ἀσφαλτοὶν ἐνύμματα, in *Epiph.* phrase, those streams of brimstone, that naturally flow from such mines as these, I mean from the pernicious and poysonous effects of them, though some that conceive obedience unnecessary to justification, live very strict and gracious lives in spite of all those advantages and encouragements to

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the contrary, yet now, God knows, the truth is too grossly discover'd; the Gnosticks divinity begins to revive, a great deal of carnall, I am sure of spiritual filthinesse, yea all the profanenesse and villany in the world is now the most naturall spawn of those infusions; and to look no farther then the glasse, and those foul selves which that reflects unto us, *The cause of God, and the faith of Christ*, of which we are seriously such Champions, is, I fear, as much dishonoured and renounced by our faithlesse, Apostate, Atheistical actions, by our hellish oaths and imprecations, (that pultroon sin, that second part of Egyptian plague of frogs, and lice, and locusts, the basest that ever had the honor to blast a Royall Army, that casts us into such Epileptick fits, such impure foamings at the mouth, and will not be bound no not with chains) in a word, by our going on in such sins, against which the denuntiation is most punctuall, that *they which doe these things shall never enter into the kingdome of heaven*, and yet flattering our selves, that we shal not fail to enter, as by all the species of Infidelity, all the Judaisme and Mahometisme, and Barbarisme in the world. And therefore as it is the mercy of the Apostle thus to disabuse his besotted Corinthians [*know yee not*] and [*be not deceived*] neither Fornicators, nor any of that bestiall crew shall inherit the kingdome of heaven, in these, so is it the justice of his charity to make it a prime ingredient in an Apostolick Sermon; scarce any other Article so necessary to be preached, especially to a *Felix*, whether as a Commander, or as a Heathen, or as one peculiarly guilty of those sins: and that is the second part of the relative aspect of these words, as they refer to the Auditory, my next particular.

And 1. as *Felix* was an *Eques Romanus*, Procurator of *Judea*, whose power gave him opportunities to bee unjust; and his splendid life, temptations to incontinence no part of christian Religion, no Article of the Creed is so proper for his turn, as the doctrine of the judgment to come for such sins as these; that palliate vulgar cure of healing and not searching of wounds, of preaching assurance of present pardon, before reformation is wrought, of solacing but not amending of sinners, is not the method in *St. Pauls*, in *Christs* dispensatory; 'tis the scandal rather and reproach of Christianity in *Julian*, *ὅτις ὁδοποιεῖ, ὅτις*

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μαρὸν, εἰς τὴν ἀσφάλειαν, security, and protection, and place of confidence from Christ to the most polluted villain, the defamation of *Constantine* in *Zozimus*, that he turn'd Christian because he was guilty of such sins, for which no other Religion allowed expiation; No, the onely safe medicinal course is to apply corrosives and causticks, the terrors of the Lord, and the consuming fire of the Lord, the judgment to come, when any mortified flesh is to be gotten out; and to accept the face of a *Felix* in this kind, to withhold those saving medicines in civility to the person to whom they are to be administred, and so suffer that sin upon my splendid Neighbor, that my charity requires me to rebuke in any meaner person, this is the unjustest rudeness in the world, the most treacherous senselesse compli-
 ance, the most barbarous civility, cruel mercy, the telling him in effect, that he is too great to be cured; this (saith *Procopius*) is the saluting by the way, which *Elisha* forbids *Gebezi*, and Christ the Disciples, the one when he went to cure, the other to preach; and 'tis his observation there, that such civilities *δυναστείας καλύπτει*, keep Preachers from working any miracles; the gentle handling of the great mans sins, is many times the damning of him, and debauching all the neighbourhood; The Lord bee merciful to our whole tribe, for our uncharitable omissions in this matter.

And for once I may chance to deserve your pardon if I doe not conceive the flatteringst addresses to you, to be alwaies the friendlyest: If in meer charity to some Auditors I imitate my Saviour, and tel you of woes even under a Saviour, of casting into utter darknesse, where the worm never dieth, and the fire is not quenched, with all the variations and exchange of accents three times repeated by our Saviour, within four Verses, of an *Horrendum est, What a fearfull thing it is to fall into Gods hands*, and bee ground to powder by that fall, if I bring out all those Topicks of so true, and withall such amazing Rhetorick, with [*who can dwell with everlasting burnings?*] and all little enough to rouze you out of that dead prodigious sleep of sin, to retrench the fury of one riotous lust.

I beseech you tell me, is there ever a judgment to come, ever an account to be given for moral vertues? Doe you so much as

fear, that for every unclean embrace, or dalliance, every shamelesse loud ryot, for every boisterous rage or execration, that I may not adde for every contumelious rude addresse to the throne of grace, every base contempt of that majesty that fills this place, God shall one day call you into judgment, if you doe, and yet goe on in these, believe me, you are the valiantest daringst persons in the world: and if death be not more formidable to you then hell, you are fit for a reserve or forlorn hope, for the Canons mouth, for Cuirassiers, for fiends to duel with: and let me for once set up an infamous trade, read you a Lecture of cowardise, and assure you that *a judgment to come* may be allowed to set you a *trembling*, that it may be reconcilable with Gallantry to fear him that can cast both body and soul into hell, and put you in mind of that which perhaps you have not considered, that you are not Atheists enough to stand out those terrors when they begin to come close up to you, in a death-bed-clap of thunder; *Cain* that was the first of this Order was not able to bear that near approach, *he went out from the presence of the Lord*: and the Rabbins have a fancy of *Abfalom*, that when he was hang'd by his hair in the midst of his rebellion, he durst not cut it, because he saw hel below him, but chose to die rather then adventure to fall into that place of horror, that his attached conscience had prepared for him; They are, beleieve it, such unreformed Atheistical hights as these, that have made it so indifferent a choice, Whether the kingdome be destroyed, or no; whether it be peopled with Satyrs, or with wilder men, become all desert, or all Bedlam.

This heaviest judgment that ever fel upon a Nation, extream misery, and extream fury, is, I confesse, a most direful sight, but withall, a more inauspicious prognostick, a found of a Trumpet to that last more fatal Day, with an *Arise* thou dementate sinner and *come to judgment*; When all our most bloody sufferings, and more bloody sins got together into one *Akeldama* or *Tophet*, shal prove but an adumbration of that heavier future doom, after which we shal doe that to some purpose, which we doe now but like beginners, by way of assay, *curse God and die*, suffer and blaspheme, blaspheme and suffer forever.

But then secondly, this doctrine of justice and continence, and
judgment

judgment to come, is most necessary, as to awake the courtly Governour Felix, so in the next place, to convert the unbelieving heathen Felix.

Will you see the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, when they are to be infused into such an one, or as the Originall hath it, *ἀρχὴν ἀληθείας τῆς Χριστοῦ*, Heb. 6. 1. the doctrine of the beginning of Christ, the laws of the *μυστήριον*, or initiation of a heathen Convert, the elements of his Catechisme they are in that place, Heb. 6. 2. 1. Repentance from dead works. And 2. Faith towards God. 3. Resurrection. And 4. Eternall judgment : and beleve me, for him that thus comes unto God out of his animal heathen unregenerate life, τὸ ἀναστῆναι ἐκ νεκρῶν, the Catalogue of the *necessario credenda*, is not over large; he must beleve that God is, and that he is a rewarder, Heb. 11. 6. this, and it seems no more but this, is the *minimum quod sic*, the summe of the faith without which 'tis impossible to please him: and therefore perhaps it was that *Ammianus Marcellinus* expresses his wonder, that *Constantinus* should call so many Councils, whereas before, Christian Religion was *res simplicissima*, a plain Religion without contentions or intricacies, and *Epiphanius* of the primitive times, that *ἀσέβεια & εὐσεβεια*, divided the Church into its true and erroneous members, Impiety the onely Heretick, good life the orthodox Professor.

Next the acknowledgment of the one God, and his eternall Son the crucified *Messias* of the world, and the Holy Ghost, those one and three Authors of our Religion, into which we are baptized (and those few other branches of that faith) the judgment to come, and the practise of Christian virtues in the elevated Christian pitch, is the prime, if not onely necessary. And though there be more to be known, fit to exercise his industry, or his curiosity, that hath treasur'd up these fundamentals in an honest heart, yet sure not to serve his carnall mind, to purge his spleen, to provoke his choler, to break communions, to dilapidate that peace, that charity, that Christ beyond all other inheritances bequeathed to his Disciples. Let us but joyn in that unity of spirit in those things which we all know to bee Articles of Faith, and the precise conscientious practise of what we cannot chuse but know to be branches of our duty,

and I shall never lead you into any confounding depths or mazes, divert you one minute by a walk in the gallery from that more Christian employment and task in the workhouse: And that will be the improvement of the second particular.

Lastly, as the *Felix* was guilty of those sins which those virtues did reproach to him.

This *Felix* is to be met with in our Books presented to us upon a double view of *Tacitus* and *Josephus*; *Tacitus* renders him an *Eques Romanus* that *Claudius* had sent Procurator of *Judea*, to manage it for a time, and saith, he did it *per omnem severitiam & libidinem*, in the most cruel arbitrary manner; and then see the difference of an Apostolick Preacher, from *Tertullus* the Rhetor, the one at his humble addresse and acknowledgment of the obligations that the whole nation had received from this most excellent *Felix*, ver. 2. But St. Paul in a pricking close discourse, of justice, and (upon neglect of it) judgment to come.

Josephus he looks nearer into his actions, and finds him a tyrannicall usurper of another mans wife; *Drusilla* seduced to his bed from her Husband *Azys* the King of the *Esseni*. And then the Sermon of the faith on *Christ* presently lets loose at this adulterous couple, and so you have the seasonableness of the *mei* *ἐπιμαρτυρίας* too, of chastity to the unchast *Felix*, and of judgment to come on such wasting sins.

This will certainly teach the Preacher, the combatant of the Lord, the *πομπικὸς ἀδελφός*, the regular manner of his duelling with sin, not the *ἀέθρα δόξης*, wounding the empty aire, lashing those sins or sinners, that are out of reach of his stripes, but the closer, nearer encounter, the directing his blows at those crimes that are present to him, most culpable and visible in his Auditor; and thus grasping with the *Goliath* of *Gath*, the tallest Philistin in the company.

There is a wide distance betwixt reproaching of present, and absent sinners, the same that betwixt reproof, and backbiting, the boldness and courage of a Champion, and the detractions and whispers of a villain; the first, is an indication of spirit; the second, of gall; the first, that a man dares attempt the loving, and saving of his Brother, when he shall endanger being cursed and hated for it, sacrifice your opinion, to your health, your kindness, to your souls.

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The second, is a character of a Sollicitor see'd on none but Satans errand, an Orator to set you a railing, but not a trembling, one that can write Satyrs on condition they shall doe you no good; incense, but not reform, that if it shall be possible for hell to lose by his Sermon, will never preach more; The one meaneth to transform his auditory into Converts and Saints, the other into Broylers and Devils; the one hath all the charity, the other all the mean malice, and treachery in his designe.

And having such a copy before our eyes, suppose a man should divert a little to transcribe it, and in stead of prudence, and tempering, and reviling of those that are out of our reach, reason a while of one branch of justice, yea, and of the faith of Christ, in which 'tis possible we may some of us be concern'd; and enquire, Whether there be not a piece of Turkish divinity stole out of their Alchoran into our Creed; that of *Prosperum & felix scelus virtus vocatur*, whether the great laws of Vertue and Vice be not by some *Politici*, taken out of the *Ephemerides*, nothing decreed honest but what we can prognosticate successful, the [*visita Catoni*] the liking that cause which the heavens do not smile on, is a piece of philosophical sullenesse, which we have not yet learn'd of Christ; What is this, but as St. Bernard complains in his time, that those images had the most hearty adorations performed to them, which had most of the gold and gems about them; the God obliged to the Image, and the Image to the dresse for all the votaries it met with; Have the Romanists marks of the Church so convinc'd us, that we must presently forsake our Saviour, because we see him in danger of crucifying, tear our Gospels, and run out with horror as soon as we come to the 26. of Mat. *the multitude with swords and staves for to take him?* Was the cause of God worth the charge and pains of killing men formerly, and is it not worth the patience and constancy of suffering now? Is there any condition in the world so hugely desireable, as that of suffering for, or with Christ? *ἰδοὺ μακάριον τοὺς ὑπομένοντας*, [*behold, we count them happy that suffer*] was Gospel in St. James his days, ch. 5. 11. (the *μακάριον* denotes the state of the *οἱ μακάριοι*, the dead Saints in their country of vision, as you know St. Steven at the minute

nute of his sufferings *saw the glory of God, and Iesus sitting* the state of suffering is a state of blisse, I may adde a superiour degree of a glorified state, a more then *ἰουδαία*, a dignity above that Orbe, that the Angels move in; For, they for want of bodies are deprived of the honor of suffering, all that they aspire to, is but to be our Seconds, our Assistants in this combat; onely Christ and wee have the enclosure of that vast preferment. And if there be any need to heighten it yet farther, is there any prize more worthy that masculine valor, then that venerable sacred name, *Jerusalem the mother of us all*, that brought us forth unto Christ, begot us to all our hope of blisse, and now, for no other crime but that, is a struggling under the pangs and agonies of a bitter combat with the ingratefull'st children under Heaven; the Church of *England*, I mean, which whosoever hath learning and temper enough to understand, knows to be the brightest image of primitive purity, the most perfect conjunction of the most *ancient* and most *holy* faith that for these twelve hundred years any man ever had the honor of defending, or suffering for. And should the provocations of an ungrateful people, the not valuing or not walking worthy of the treasures here reserv'd, the rude continu'd iniquities of our holy things, tempt God to deliver it up, as he did once his Ark to the Philistins, his Christ to the Pharisees and the Souldiers, the zeal of the one, and the fury of the other; yet sure this would not be the confuting of what now I say, 'twould not, I must hope, be an argument of Gods renouncing that Ark, and that Christ, which he did not thus deliver. The Turks having conquered and torn out of the Christians hands the places of the Birth and Passion of Christ, did after this way of Logick inferre that God had judg'd the cause for *Mahomet* against Christ; and *Trajan* could ask the primitive Martyr *Ignatius*, *Et nos non tibi videmur deservere*, &c. Have not we as much of God in us as you, who prosper by the help of our deities against our enemies? Let me purloyn or borrow this heathen piece out of your hands, and I shall be able to give you an ancienter piece in exchange for it, a thorough Christian resolution of abiding by God, of approving our selves to Heaven, and to our own breasts, whatsoever it costs us, of venturing the *Ermins* fate, (the very Hun-
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ters hand, rather then soule her body) the *pati, & mori posse*, the passive as well as the active courage, which will bear us up through all difficulties, bring us days of refreshment here, or else provide us anthemes in the midst of flames, a paradise of comfort here, and of joyes hereafter: and let this serve for the exemplifying the point in hand, the fitnessse of our Apostles discourse to *Felix's* state.

I might doe it again by telling you of the dreadfull majesty that dwels in this house, the designation of it to be a *house of Prayer* to all people, a place of *crying mightily to the Lord* at such times as these; should I let loose a whole hour on this theme in this place, 'twould be but too perfect a parallel of *St. Pauls* discourse of *chastity* before *Felix*, which in any reason ought to fet many of my Auditors a *trembling*, but it seems we have not yet sufferings enough to doe so: and there is one particular behind that will rescue you from this uneasie subject, the *manner* of *St. Pauls* handling this theme, by way of *reasoning*. And when hereasoned, &c.

The importance of this reasoning I shall but name to you, which I conceive to be, 1. The proposing to a very Heathens consideration, the equity and reasonableness that there should be a *judgment to come* to recompence the unjust and incontinent person. And 2. the charging home to each sinners heart, the extream unreasonableness, that for so poor advantages as either of those sins bring in to any man, he should think fit to venture that dismall payment in another world.

And now my Brethren, to conclude this *reasoning*, and your task of patience together, when you are likely to have so little excuse in perishing, so no colour of reason for so wild an option, of chusing death in the error of your ways, when you must be so out of countenance, when you come to that place of darknesse, so unable to give any account to any fiend that meets you, why you should cast away all the treasures in the world for that so sad a purchase, and act that really which the Rabbins feign of the Child *Moses*, preferre the coal of fire before the ingot of Gold, chop it into your mouths, and so singe your tongue, not to make you stammer with him, but howle with *Dives* for ever after, and not get one drop to quench the

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tip of that tongue, which is so sadly tormented in those flames; when, I say, you are likely to come so excuselesse to your torments, so unpityed, and so scorned, 'to without all honor in your sufferings, as having but your petitions granted you, advanced to your vengeance as to your preferment, *optantibus ipsis*, whilst Heaven was look'd on as a troublesome impertinent suiter, and you would not be happy, onely because you would not; O remember then the Disciples farewell, when they gave over the Jews, and turn'd to the Gentiles, *Behold you despisers, and wonder, and perish*; But before you doe so, if it be possible give one vitall Spring, and if but for *Pythagoras's* [*αἰολύειο συντόμῃ*] for the reverence, (if not the charity) for the honour and awe you owe to your own souls, if not to save them, yet to save your credits in the world, to manifest that you are not such abject fools, retract your choice, call back the hostages you have given to Satan, and set out on a more rationally, more justifiable voyage. You have heard of the rich Spaniard that had put all his estate into jewels, how hee was ready to run mad with the fancy of thinking what a condition he should be in, if all men next morning should awake wise, that he should become not onely the arrantest Begger, but the most ridiculous Fool. And beleve it, that last Trump when it begins to sound, will have the faculty thus to make all men wise, to disabuse, and inspire the whole world with a *new sense*: Those that are in the flames before you, will reproach your madnesse, count you but Bedlams to come thither; Poor *Dives*, if he had but a Messenger, would long since have sent you a hideous report and admonition, that whatever it cost you, you should not venture coming to that place of torments; O let *St. Pauls* reasoning doe it to us here, that we make not such piteous bargains, pay not so sad a price for so pure a nothing. Let us be wise now, that we may be happy eternally; which wisdom the onely way to that happiness God of his infinite mercy grant us all: to whom, &c.

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The blessing influence of *Christ's*
Resurrection.

The IX. being a *Easter-Sermon*

At *S. Maries* in OXFORD, *An. Dom. 1644.*

ACTS 3. 26.

*God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to blesse you,
in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.*

Were but a cold unequall oblation to so blessed, so glorious a festivity, to entertaine you with the story of the Day, to fetch out the *napkin* and the grave-clothes, to give you that now for newes, that every seventh day for sixteen hundred yeares hath so constantly preach'd unto you. 'Tis true indeed what *Aristotle* observes in his *metaphysics*, that the every-day wonders are the greatest, the perfectest miracles those that by their commonness have lost all their veneration; he speaks it of a circle which is

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of all things most common, and yet of all things most strange, made up of all contraries, and so the mother of all prodigies in art, of all the engines and machines in the world. And the same might be resolved of this yearly, this weekly revolution, the greatest, but commonest festival in the Christian Calender, *Sabbatum iniquitatis*, the queen-day, as Saint Chrysost: calls it, I, and that Queen all glorious within, a many saving miracles inclosed in it, and yet this Queen of most familiar condescendings, is content to be our every weeks prospect, and after all this as glorious still as ever, no gluts, no satieties in such beholdings.

But supposing this, I must yet tell you, one pretious gemme there is in this jewell, one part of the great businesse of this day, which is not so commonly taken notice of, and that is the blessing saving office of the day to us, the benigne aspect, the speciall influence of the rising of Christ on the poor Sinners soule, the use, the benefit of the Resurrection; and to discover this unto you, let me with confidence assure you, there is not a veine in this whole mine, a beame in this whole treasure of light, a plume of those healing wings of the Sun of righteousness, a Text in this whole Booke of God, able to stand you in more stead, then this clofe of Saint Peters Sermon: That our justification is more dependent on his resurrection, then his death it self, is sometimes clearly affirmed by Saint Paul, he was delivered up for our offences, and raised again for our justification, Rom. 4. 25. It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, Rom. 8. 34. and so for salvation it self, And being made perfect, he became the Authour of eternall salvation, Heb. 5. 9. *τελειωθείς*, being consummate and crown'd (as *τελειώσις ἀθλήτης*, is the crowning of Martyrs) or *τελειώσις*, being consecrated to his great Melchisedech-priestly office (as the context enforceth, and *τελειώσις* in the Septuagint imports) in either sense a denotation of the resurrection of Christ peculiarly; and in this capacity considered, he became the *αὐτὸς σωτήρας*, the Authour of our salvation: But for all this compacted together, and the distinct explication of the manner how all this is wrought by Christ's resurrection, this is a felicity reserv'd, the peculiar prerogative of this Text, brought out now and prepared for you, if you can but

but have patience till you see it open'd. *God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to blesse, &c.*

In these words one fundamentall difficulty there is, the clearing of which will be the first part of my taske, and ground-worke of my future discourse; and that is to enquire what is meant by *sending Christ to blesse*, which when we have open'd, there will remaine but two particulars behind, *The time of this sending*, and *the interpretation of this blessing*; *The time of this sending after his resurrection*, *God having raised up sent him*. *The interpretation of this blessing*, or wherein it consists, *In turning e-very, &c.*

I begin with the first of these, To cleare the fundamentall difficulty, or explain what is meant by *sending to blesse*.

All sorts of Arts and Sciences have their *τεχνολογήματα*, their peculiar phrases and words of art, which cannot be interpreted fully but by the criticall observing their importance among those Artists. Casaubon, I remember, observes it among the Deipnosophists, that they had their *ἐκκυκλίω α τεχνολογήματα*, that none but *Athenæus* can interpret to us: and certainly the Booke of God and Christ that spake as never man spake, must not be denied this priviledge; Among the many that might be refer'd to this head, two here we are fall'n on together, the matter of our present enquiry, *sending* and *blessing*. The word *שלח* to send, and the Greek parallel to it, if we look it in common Dictionaries, and in many places of the Scripture it self, is a word of most vulgar obvious notion, but if you will aske the Scripture-Criticke, you shall find in it sometimes a rich, weighty, pretious importance, *To designe*, or *destine*, to *install*, or *consecrate*, to *give commission* for some great office, [*How shall they preach unlesse they be sent?*] and a hundred the like. Thus we heare of the *sending of Kings, Judges, Prophets*, but especially of our spiritual Rulers under the Gospel: No other title assign'd them, but that of *שלוחים* or *ἀποστολοι*, the *missi*, the *sent* or the *Messengers* of Christ, (the more shame for those that contemne this mission, lay violent hand on that sacred function, the meanest and lowest of the people, (to make one parallel more betwixt *Jeroboams* Kingdome, and ours) those *παράκληται*, in *Ignatius* phrase, *brasse Coines* of their own impressing, so contrary to the royal

prerogative of heaven, *ἰσὺς ἐμπιστος*, in Saint Peters agonistical stile, that run without any watch-word of Gods to start them; yea, and run like Abimaaz, out-run all others that were truly sent) The defect in our tongue for the expressing of this, is a little repair'd by the use of the word [Commission] which if you will here exchange for the word Sent, and so read it thus, God having raised up his son Jesus, gave him commission to blesse us, you will somewhat discern and remember the importance of this first phrase.

And so againe, *ברך* to blesse, and the *εὐλοῖται* in the Text, so fully answerable to it, though it be a vulgar stile in all Ages, yet a propriety it hath in this place, and in some others of Scripture, noting the Office of a Priest, to whom it peculiarly belongs to pronounce, and pray for blessings, i.e. in this eminent sense, to blesse others.

For there being two sorts of Priests in Pentateuch, or if you will, two acts of the same divine function, the one of blessing, the other of sacrificing, the one observable in the Fathers of every Family, in Gen. (who therefore use solemnly to blesse their Children) and after the enlarging of Families into Kingdomes, belonging to Kings, and eminently and signally notified in Melchisedech Gen. 14. 19. The other more conspicuous in Aaron, and his Successours in the Jewish Priesthood: Both these are most eminently remarkable in our Christ, the one in his death, the other ever since his resurrection. The sacrificing part most clearly a shadow of that one great oblation on the altar of the Cross for us, and in spight of Socinus such a Priest once was Christ, though but once in spight of the Papists. Once, when he offer'd that one precious oblation of himself, the same person both Priest, and sacrifice; and but once, no longer Priest thus, then he was thus a sacrificing; this is his *παράκλησις*, or *παράκλησις*, Heb. 7. 23. a Priesthood not suffer'd to continue, the same minute determin'd his mortall life and mortall Priesthood, buried the Aaronicall rites and the Priest together. But for the Melchisedech-Priesthood, that of blessing in my Text, that of intercession, powerfull intercession, i.e. giving of grace sufficient to turne us; this is the Office that still belongs unto Christ, the peculiar grand office, to which that notion of *Χεῖρ*

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(to which Christ's durable union) belongs, by which he was *ἁγιασθήσεται* *ἡ δόξα*, consecrate for evermore, Heb. 7. ult. parallel to that so frequent stile of his a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech, not that Melchisedech was a Priest for ever, and Christ like him in that, but that Christ was to continue for ever such a Priest as Melchisedech, in Gen. was, or that his Aaronicall Priesthood had an end, one sacrifice, and no more; but his other Melchisedech-Priesthood was to last for ever, which you will more discern if you proceed to the second particular, the date of this sending, the time of his installment into this Priesthood, after his resurrection: God having raised up, sent, &c.

That this resurrection install'd Christ to his eternall Priestly office (or to that part of it which was to endure for ever) is a truth that nothing but inadvertence hath made men question; There's nothing more frequently insinuated in the Scripture; were not my Text demonstrative enough, first [raised up] and then thus [sent] or install'd, the 5. and 7. to the Heb. would more then prove it: so in that fundamentall grand prophesie, to which all that is said there, refers, that in the 110. Psal. the Priesthood of Christ is usher'd in with a [Sit thou at my right hand] verse 1. ruling in the midst of enemies, vers. 2. the day of his power, vers. 3. all these certain evidences of his resurrection, and then, and not till then, v. 4. [the Lord hath sworn, &c. thou art a Priest for ever:] a mortall dying determinable Priest he was before in his death, but now after his resurrection from that death, a Priest for ever. Once more, Heb. 7. 15. perhaps there may be some emphasis in the [ἀριστάς, ariseth] there ariseth another Priest, or he ariseth another, an Aaronical-Priest in his death, but *ἄλλος ἱερεύς*, a Melchisedech (i.e. another kind of) Priest in his resurrection. Add to this that the Melchisedech-Priest must be like the type, a King as well as a Priest, (which Christ as Man was not till after his resurrection) and so that other famous type of our Jesus, Zach. 6. 13. Josua the son of Josedek the high Priest, he shall be a Priest upon the throne, and the counsell of peace (that grand consultation of reconciling Sinners to God) shall be betwixt them both, in the union of that Scepter and that Ephod, that Mitre and that Crowne, the *ἡγεστὸς βασιλεὺς*, & *ἱερεὺς*, the Regall and Sacerdotall office

office of *Christ*; and as one, so the other, both dated alike from after the *resurrection*; *ἡ ἀνάστασις*, the thing that by this accumulation of Scripture-testimonies, it was necessary to demonstrate. For the clearing of which truth, and reconciling or preventing all difficulties about it, please you to take it in these few propositions.

1. That the *Crucifixion* of *Christ* was a sacrifice truly propitiatory, and satisfactory for the sins of the whole world, (and there's nothing farther from this Text or our present explanation of it, then to derogate from the Legality, the amplitude, extent, or precious value of this sacrifice.)

Yea and 2. that *Christ* himself thus willingly offering, delivering up himself for us, may in this be said a *Priest*, or to have exercised in his death a grand act of *Priesthood*.

But then 3. this is an act of *Aaronicall-Priesthood* which *Christ* was never to exercise againe, having done it once, *Heb. 7. 27.* and so farre distant from his *eternall Priesthood*. Or, to speake more clearly; an act of *Christ* this, as of a *second Adam*, a common person, order'd by the wisdom of God to bear the chastisement of our peace, the scape-goat to carry all our sins on his head into the wilderness, into a land not inhabited, *Deut. 16. 22.* the *adams*, in our Creed, to which he went; and so though it were typified by all the sacrifices of the *Priests*, and though in it that whole body of rites were determin'd, (no more *Aaronicall-Priest* seasonable after this one sacrifice) yet still this is no part of the *eternall regall Melchisedech-Priesthood*, that of powerfull intercession, that of blessing us in the Text; for though the death of *Christ* tend mightily toward the blessing of us, though there were a wonderfull act of intercession on the Crosse, [*Father forgive them*] yet that powerfull intercession, that for grace to make us capable of mercy, that blessing in this Text, the power of conferring what he prais for, this 'twas to which the resurrection install'd him.

4 If all this will not satisfie, why then one way of clearing this truth farther, I shall be able to allow you, that the death of *Christ* considered as a sacrifice, may under that notion passe not for an act of a *Priest in facio esse*, but for a ceremony of his inauguration *in fieri*; thus in the 8. of *Levit.* at the consecrating of *Aa-*

rou and his sons, you shall find sacrifices used, the Ram, the Ram of consecration, v. 22. and apportion'd to that, this Lamb of God that by dying taketh away the sins of the world, may passe for a Lamb of consecration, the true criticall importance of the *πλυντὴν διὰ τοῦ θυμίου*, Heb. 2. 10. that the Captain of our salvation was to be consecrated by sufferings. This death of his, that looks so like an act of Aaronicall-Priesthood is the preparative rite of consecrating him to that great eternall Priesthood after the order of Melchisedech, and this preparative most absolutely necessary both in respect of Christ and us, of Christ who was to drink of the brook of the way before his head should be lifted up, humbled to death, &c. Phil. 2. wherefore God hath also highly exalted him, for that suffering crown'd him; Yea, and in respect of us too, Heb. 2. 9. who were to be ransom'd by his death, before we could be blessed by his resurrection, deliver'd from the captivity of Hell, before capable of that grace which must help us to heaven, which seems to me to be the descant of that plain song, Heb. 2. 17, 18. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, i. e. as the 18. v. explains it, to suffer being tempted, to undergoe the infirmities and mortalitie of our flesh, that he might be a mercifull and faithfull High-priest, &c. his infirmities and effusion of his blood are not this Priesthood it self, but the qualifying of the second person in the Trinity, to become a High-priest, and that a mercifull and faithfull one, Mercifull to pardon slips, and Faithfull to uphold from falling, and so a Priest, such as it is most for our interest to have. And so once more the dream is out that Artemidorus mentions of one, he dream'd he was crucified, and the consequent was, *ἰεὺς ἀνελήφθην*, he was taken up to bee a Priest of Diopolis; And by the way, let me tell my Clergy Brethren, if that shall prove the consequent of our Priesthood, which was the presage of Christs, the pains, the contumelies, yea and death of that Crosse, what is this but a blessed lot, that hath brought us so neer our Christ, and a means to consecrate us too to our *βασιλεὺν ἰεράτευμα*, to be Kings and Priests for ever in Heaven.

I have thus far labour'd to clear this doctrine, calculated the time of Christs enstallment to his eternall Priesthood, and found it exactly the same with the *era* here in this Text, not till after

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the resurrection, to which I shall only adde one final grand proof of all, which will summe up all that hath been hitherto said, That parting speech of *Christ*, *Mat. ult.* [*All power is given unto me both in heaven and earth,*] that you know was after the resurrection, and so from thence that power was dated, and that commission of blessing that here we speak of, (the act of his eternall Priesthood) is his intercession, that intercession, his powerfull intercession, that his giving of that grace which he intercedes for, that the blessing in this Text; and so the commission of blessing was given him not till after the resurrection. And beleeve it, though it look all this while like a rough sapless speculation, there is yet something in it, that may prove very usefull and ordinable to practice, a hint if not a means of removing one of the harmfull 't scandalls and impediments of good life, that is to be met with. We are Christians all, and by that claim *τὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἀντίστοιχον*, on rank, and on march toward eternall life, and yet many of us live like so many Mahometans or Chinai-infidels, quite out of all form of obedience to the commands of *Christ*, we do not reverence him so much as to pretend toward serving him, not advance so far as but to be hypocrites in that matter, live in all the sensuality and villenese in the world, and yet live confidently, resolve we have done what is required of us by *Christ*, can justifie our state for such as God is pleased with; And if we be called to account, the anchor of all this unreasonable false hope of ours, is most constantly this, that *Christ* our Priest hath propitiated for us, wee flie to our City of refuge till our Priest be dead, and then we are quit by proclamation, out of the reach of the avenger of blood. 'Tis the death of *Christ* we depend on to do all our task for us, his Priestly, not Regall office, we are resolved to be beholding to, In that we have *Christ* the Sacrificer, *Christ* the Reconciler, *Christ* the Satisfier, and these are *Christ*s enough to keep us safe, without the aid of *Christ* the King, that Judaical unedifying notion of a reigning *Messias*, and then *quis separabit*, what sin, what Devils, what Legion, what Act, what Habit, what Custome, what Indulgence in sin, i. e. what Tophet, what Hell shall be able to separate us from the love, the favour, the heaven of God?

Hethat hath *Christ* the Priest, hath all; he that beleeves in the sufferings, hath *Christ* the Priest, though not the King; hath the faith,

faith, though not the *works*, i. e. the *righteousnesse*, though not the *Heathenish morality*; the Protestant, Orthodox part, though not the Popery, the *Antichristianism* of a *Christian*, & so is but the richer for that want; hath the greater portion in the *sufferings* of *Christ*, by the abundance of those sins he suffered for; the more of the the *Priest* is ours, by how much the lesse of the *King* is discernible in us. Having driven our *unchristian* lives to this principle, this solemn conceit of ours, that the *Priestly* office of *Christ* (to which if rightly understood wee owe all our salvation) is nothing but the *Death* of that *Christ*, methinks 'twere now possible to convince the secure *fiduciary* of the *error* and *sophistry* of his former way, to rob him of his beloved cheat. Now that we have proved so cleer, that *Christ* commenc'd his *eternall Priesthood* (that on which all our *blessednesse* depends) from the *wash-Cas*, not till after his *Resurrection*. For Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, and mourneth, and bleedeth for in secret, thou carnall confident, that hast wearied thy selfe in the greatnesse of thy way, thy profane wild-goose chase of sin, and yet hast not said, *There is no hope*, thou that wilt profane and be saved too, ryot and be saved too, reconcile faction, rebellion, sacrilege, oppression, oaths, carnality, all the *unchristian* practices in the world, (the confutation of the whole Gospel) with salvation; Tell me, I say, what *Christ* it is, thou wilt be tryed, or saved by; by *Christ* the *King*? I am confident thou wert never so impudent to venture thy rebellions to that cognizance: Well, it is *Christ* the *Priest* thou so dependest on; and why *Christ* the *Priest*? Why? because he hath *sacrificed* himself for thee. Now let me tell thee, 1. That some have gueſt ſhrewdly, that though *Christ* dyed for all the sinners, and sins in the world, yet his *sufferings* being but *finite* in *duration*, though *infinite* in respect of the *person* of the sufferer, will not prove a *λύσις ἰσχύοντος*, a proportionable ranſome for thy sins; I mean, the impenitent sinners sins, in *duration* infinite, being, as they are, undetermin'd, uncut off by repentance. Thou must *return*, *reform*, *confesse* and *forſake*, or else thou hast out-sinn'd the very *sufferings* of *Christ*, out-spent that vast ranſome, out-damned salvation it self: that may be a conviction *ad hominem* perhaps, and therefore I mention'd it in the first place. But then, 2. Thou art, it seems, all

this while mistaken in thy Priest, thou art, it seems, all for the *Aaronicall*, and hast not yet thought of the *Melchisedech-priest*; thou art all for the *sacrificer*, and never dream'st of the *blesser*. Thou layest all thy weight on the *Crosse* of Christ, and art ready to presse it down to hell with thee, with *leaning* onely, but not *crucifying* one lust on it; never thinkest of being *risen* with Christ, the condition so indispensably necessary to give us claim to the *benefit* of his death, and so in effect thou leavest Christ in the grave, and thy selfe in that mournfu'll case of the despairing Disciples, *speraveramus, we had hoped, but never look'st* after a resurrection. 'Twas St. Pauls saying, [*If in this life onely we have hope in Christ, we were of all men most miserable*] I suppose it is in this life onely, not of us, but of Christ on this earth, for it is brought to prove Christs resurrection there, and it follows immediately, *but now is Christ raised*, 1 Cor. 15. 20. and if that bee the sense of the *ζωὴ αἰών* there, the [*this life of Christ*] contains also his death under it, for both those together it is, that must make up the opposite to the resurrection. And then I shall enlarge the Apostles words, though not sense, *If in the earthly life and death of Christ we had hope onely, a sad life, and a contumelious death, if there were no such thing as a resurrection to help blesse us, we were of all men the most miserable; hadst thou no other Priest, but the sacrificer, the mortall finite Aaronicall-Priest, nothing but the ranfome of Christs death, (which, though it be never so a high a price, is yet finally unavailable to many for whom it was paid, hee bought them that are damn'd for denying him, 2 Pet. 2. 1. the wilfull sinner treads under foot the Son of God, profanes the blood of the covenant by which he is sanctified, Heb. 10. 29. and so there's destruction enough still behind for the impenitent wretch, after all that Christ hath suffer'd for thee) what forms of ejulation and lamentation were enough for thee, alas my Brother! ah Lord, or ah his glory! what mourning or wailing were thy portion? Tell me, wilt thou be content to leave thy Father before hee hath bless'd thee? Jacob would not doe so with the Angel, but would wrestle his thigh out of joynt, rather then thus part with him, and even the profane Esau will run and weep bitterly for it, and then art thou more nice and tender then that smooth Jacob, wretchlesse then that profane Esau, if thou content'st thy selfe*

selfe onely to have brought *Christ* to the grave, that state of curse,
 and never look't out for the *blessing* provided for thee in the
 Resurrection : Mistake me not, I would not drive you from
 this *Crosse of Christ* , discourage you from that most necessary *act*
 of faith , the apprehending the crucified *Saviour* ; No, if my lot
 had fallen on a *Good-friday* , I would have spent my whole hour
 on that one theme, and *known nothing among you but Jesus Christ*
 and him crucified : Onely my desire is, that you will not allow
 one *act* of *Faith* to turn Projector, to get all the custome from
 the rest, that you will permit *Christ* to live in you, as well as to
 die for you, to blesse as well as to satisfie, to rise again for your justifi-
 cation, as well as to be delivered up for your offences; that you will
 attend him at *Galilee* as well as at *Golgotha* , think of the triumphant
 as well as the crucified *Saviour* , the eternall *Melchisedech* , as well as
 the mortall *Aaron-Priest* . And not onely to think of his rising, I
 must tell you, but count of a work, a mighty important neces-
 sary work, that of turning, in this Text, to be wrought on us,
 and in us by that *Resurrection* now, after the pardon impetrated
 by his passion; I say, not onely to think of and beleve him risen,
 the Devill hath as much of that thought, as frequent repeated
 acts of that belief as you^s, and there is not such *magie* in that
 faith or fancy, as to bear you to Heaven by meditating on his
 journey thither, to elevate you by gazing on his ascension. No,
 that *faith* must bee in our hearts too, that principle of Action,
 and Practice, they must open to him as the *Tulip* to the rising
 Sun, or as the everlasting dores to that *King of glory* , give him an ala-
 crious hospitable reception, as the friend to the friend, as the
 diseased to the Physitian, deliver themselves up most willing
 Patients to all his *blessing* warming influences, to all his medicina-
 ble saving methods, that he may sanctifie, and reform, blesse
 and turn, live and reign in our hearts by *faith* , and prove a *Shiloh* in
 the Criticks notion of the word, from מלך fortunatus est, the
 work of the Lord, for which he raised him, thrive and prosper in his
 bands. We must rise with *Christ* , as well as die with him, doe as
 the bodies of the Saints that slept, Mat. 28. 53. arise and come out of
 our graves^s of sin, goe into the holy City and appear to many. Our resur-
 gere must be attended with an ire, (an ire of obedience, Go, and he
 goeth; an ire of motion too, an active stirring vitall life, not sit
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onely or creep, but goe and walk, and run the way of Gods commandments) and then 2. we must have a term for that motion, a matter for that obedience, an *ubi* for that *ire*, and that [*civitatem sanctam*,] 1. the City, and then the *holy*, the life of the man, the Citizen, the Common-wealths man, risen with *Christ* in every of these capacities; and then the *sanctam*, a superaddition of all sanctity, of all that's *Christian*, and in all these notions we must *ire*, and *praire*, goe before as a *ἡγούμενος*, and so doe that great act of charity, attract others after us by exemplary lightsome actions, *apparere multis*, conduct the stray multitude to heaven. That this is the benefit of *Christs* resurrection, and that there is no faith or beleeif in this article to be counted of, but that that is thus improved, thus evidenced, is the speciall thing that I meant to perswade you from these words, which I shall endeavour to doe by reserving the remainder of the time for the third and last particular, the interpretation of this Priestly office of *Christ*, to which the resurrection install'd him, or wherein this blessing consists, In turning, &c.

For the equal dealing with which I conceive my self obliged to shew you these three things.

1. What is meant by turning away every one from his iniquities.
2. What the dependence is betwixt this and the resurrection of *Christ*.
3. How this turning is an interpretation of blessing, God having raised up his Son *Jesus*, sent him to blesse us, in turning, &c.

For the first, every syllable will be a hint of direction for this matter, 1. *Turn*] that one syllable is the best description of the great saving grace of repentance, *μετάνοια* τὴν ἑαυτοῦ, in *Athanasius's* phrase, the inverting, the transposing, or the turning of the soul, and lesse then that will not prove sufficient, humbling, and confessing, and grieving, and hating will not serve the turn, these are but initiall preparatives to that last hand, but dull lines, but liveless monograms, which that vital pencil in this text, that of turning must fill up; the want of this one accomplishment is the ruining of all, makes that vast chasm as wide as that betwixt *Dives* and *Abrahams* bosome; the sorrowing, confessing, self-hating, (if unreformed) sinner may frie in Hell, when none but the returning Prodigall can find admission to Heaven; and that for the

[turning.]

[turning.] The manner of which will be worth the observing also, the word [*ἀντιστρέφω*] here is common to *Christ*, and *us*, but in a different power and sense, he by way of *efficiency*, we of *non-resistance*, active in *Christ*, and but *neutrall* in *us*, he to *turn* us, and then we to *turn*, not to *resist* that power of his grace, not to goe on when he *turns* : So in other phrases of Scripture, he to *draw*, and then we to *run after him*; God to *work* in us both to *will* and to *doe*, and then we to *work out our own salvation* ; hee to *knock*, and we to *open* ; he to *rouze the sleeper*, and wee to *awake*, and *rise from the dead* ; wee to *obey his grace*, but his grace most necessary thus to *turn us* : or yet more plainly, *Christ* to use all the means of *turning us*, that can belong to *God*, dealing with reasonable creatures, and such as he means to *crown*, or *punish*, his call, his promise, his threats, his grace, preventing, exciting, assisting, in a word, all but *violence*, and *coaction* (which is destructive of all judgment to come) and we *not-to-resist*, to *grieve*, to *quench* those blessing methods, to *turn* when he will have us *turn*. Then [every one of you] the extent of that grace, consequent to that Resurrection, He is gone up on high, hath led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men, men indefinitely there, and all flesh in the other prophesie (I will pour out my spirit on all flesh) and here every one of you, i. e. primarily every one of you Jews, [unto you first] in the beginning of the Verse, but then from them diffusively to all others; The σωτηριεὺς χάρις, Tit. 2. 11. hath appeared unto all men, πανθρώποις, &c. taking them all into the school of discipline, teaching them to live soberly, and justly, and piously in this world; and again [every one] this turning is indispensably necessary, and therefore to every selfe-flatterer, O be not deceived, &c. and bring forth fruit, &c. and think not to say within your selves, We have Abraham, &c. There is no dispensation for Abrahams children, for the elect, for men of such and such perswasions, no special priviledge for Favorites, no postern-gate, or back-stairs for some choice *privado's*, all their prerogative is the *υἱὸν ἀγαπῶντος*, earliyer grace, or more grace, and consequently so much the more obligation, but then except you repent, and return, you shall all perish. Thirdly, [From his iniquities] Iniquities, first, and then [his] Iniquities; not the *ἁμαρτίας*, every legal breach, or declination, the resurrection, & grace of Christ will not thus return us to a Paradise on earth, will not thus
sublime

sublime us quite out of our frail sinner-state, till our mortality be swallowed up with life, but the *monelae*, villanies and wickednesses of the carnal man, the wasting acts, and noysome habits of an unsanctified life, from these Christ died and rose, that he might turn us. There is not a more noxious mistake, a more fatal piece of Stoicism amongst Christians, then not to observe the different degrees and elevations of sin, one of the first, another of the second magnitude, one *ignis fatuus*, or false star differing from another in dishonour, though not in glory, some spots that are spots of sons, that by a generall repentance, without particular victory over them, by an habituall resolution to amend all that is amiss, without actuall getting out of those frailties, are capable of Gods mercy in Christ, reconcilable with a regenerate estate, such are our *adverselae*, our weaknesses, ignorances, and the like; and some that are not the spots of sons, they which doe them, shall not, without actuall reformation, and victory, and forsaking, enter, or inherit the kingdom of God; after all that Christ hath done, and suffered for them; such our deliberate acts, and habits against light, against grace, the *monelae* in Text; and let mee tell you, the not-pondering these differences, not observing the grains and scruples of sin, how far the *adverselae* extend, and when they are overgrown into *monelae*, is the ground (that I say no more) of a deal of desperate profanenesse; We cannot keep from all sin, and therefore count it lost labour to endeavor to abstain from any; having demonstrated our selves men by the *adverselae*, we make no scruple to evidence our selves Devils too by the *monelae*; the desperation of perfect sinlesnesse makes us secure in all vilenesse, and being engaged in weaknesse, we advance to madnesse; either hope to be saved with our greatest sins, or fear to be damned for our least; and having resolv'd it impossible to doe all, resolve securely to doe none; our infirmities may damn us, and our rebellions can doe no more; our prayers, our alms have sin in them, and our murthers and sacriledges can be but sinfull: and to if the Devil or our interests will take the pains to sollicit it, the deadliest sin shall passe for as innocent a creature, as tame a singleesse Serpent, as the fairest Christian vertue, and all this upon the not observing the weight of the *monelae* here, which Christ rose from the grave on purpose to turn us from,
and

and from which whosoever is not turned, shall never rise unto life. Adde unto this the [*avtū*] the [*his*] iniquities, as it refers to the *author* of them, and this is the bill of *challenge* and claime to those accursed possessions of ours; nothing is so truly, so peculiarly *ours*, as our *sinnes*; and of those, as our *weaknes*, Our *frailties*, our *lapses*, our *ignorances*, the diseases, and infelicities of our nature, which may insensibly fall from us, *vix ea nostra vocat*; but our *wasting*, wilfull acts, and indulg'd *habits*, those great *Vultures* and *Tygres* of the soul, they are most perfectly our *owne*, the natural'st brats, and cruellest progeny, that ever came from our loines, nor *Ziv's*, nor *wives*, nor *servants*, in *Agamemnon's* phrase, nor *God*, nor *Fate*, nor *Fiend*, are any way chargeable with them: The first were *blasphemy*, the second *Stoicisme* and folly to boot, the third a *bearing false witnesse* against the devill himself, robbing him of his great fundamentall title of *Διabolος*, *Calumniator*, and proving those that thus charge him the greatest Devils of the twaine, and all this, is but one part of the [*avtū*] here, the [*his*] &c. as it refers to the *Author*. And [*avtū*] again, the [*his*] as it is a note of eminence, his *peculiar*, prime, reigning *sins*, that all others like the *ἰσχυρος*, or communality are faine to be subject to, sometimes a monarch-dictator-single-sin, a [*the plague in his own heart*] a principality of *ambition*, of *pride*, of *lust*, of *covetousnesse*, that all others at their distance administer unto; sometimes an *optimacy* of a few, all prime coequal in their power, and sometimes a *democracy*, or popular state, a whole *Egypt* full of locusts in one breast, a *Gad*, a troop or shole of *sins*, all leading us captive to their *shambles*; and thus our *Sovereign sins*, as different as our tempers, and every one the [*avtū*] here every man from his iniquities. The summe of this first prospect is briefly this, The turning every one from his iniquities, wherein Christs blessing us consists, is his giving of *grace sufficient* to worke an *universall*, *sincere*, *impartiall*, *thorough change* of every sinner, from all his reigning, wilfull *sins*; The sincerity, though not perfection of the new creature; And the dependence betwixt this and the resurrection of Christ, is the second, or next enquiry.

The resurrection of Christ in the Scripture-stile signifies not

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alwaies

alwaies the *act* of rising from the dead, but the consequent state after that rising, by the same proportion that *turning* is, the new creation, and the being regenerate or borne of God, signifie the state of Sonship; and not the *act* of begetting onely; So that in briefe, the *divinity* here, the raising up of Jesus, signifies the new state, to which Christ was inaugurate at his resurrection, and containes under it all the severals, of *ascension*, of sitting at the right hand of power, of the mission of the Holy Ghost, and his powerfull intercession for us in Heaven ever since, and to the end of the world; And this is the notion of the resurrection, of Christ, which is the *blessing*, which hath that influence on our turning, 'twil not be amiss to shew you how.

And here I shall not mention that morall influence of his resurrection upon ours; by the example of his powerful raising out of the grave, to preach to us the necessity of our shaking off the grave-clothes, that cadaverous, chill, noysome estate of sin, *journeying* to *new*; to rise again with him; This is the blessing in the Text; but this the example of Christ might preach long enough to dead soules, before it would be hearkned unto; although the truth is, the antient Church by their setting apart these Holy daies for the baptizing of all that were baptized, and the whole space betwixt this and Pentecost, and every Dominicall in the yeare, for the gesture of standing in all their services, that no man might come neere the earth, at the time that Christ rose from it, did certainly desire to enforce this morall on us, that our soules might now turne, and be blessed, rise and be conformed to the image of Christs resurrection. Blessed Lord! that it might be thus exemplary to us at this time. But to omit this, the speciall particulars wherein the resurrection of Christ, as our blessing, hath its influence on our turning, are briefly these three:

1. The bestowing on us some part of that Spirit by which Christ was raised out of the grave. Consider, *Rom. 8. v. 11.* and 'tis all that I shall say to you of that first particular. If the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, be that raised up Christ shall also quicken your mortall bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you, that Spirit of power by which Christ was raised out of the grave, is the very efficient of our turning, our new birth

birth, the Author of our present blessedness, and the pledge of our future immortality: God having raised his Son by his Spirit, anointed him with that Spirit to work the like miracles daily on our souls, in blessing, in turning every one, &c. and that is the first thing.

2. Christ's resurrection hath a hand in blessing, in turning from iniquity, in respect to that solemn mission of the Holy Ghost promised before, and performed immediately after his ascension. This not person, I meane, but office of the Holy Ghost, in seeing a Pastorage in the Church, and to it the consequent power, and necessity of preaching, administering Sacraments, governing, censuring, all which were the effects of the Holy Ghost descending, and the direct interpretation of the *adversus mundum*, then, and ever since then. To which if you please to add the promise of the annexion of the Spirit, and the invisible grace of God to the orderly use of these, so far, that the preaching of the Gospel (not onely that manner of preaching among us, that hath gotten the monopoly of all the service of God into its Patent, the onely thing that many of us pay all our devotion to, but any other way of making known the Gospel of Christ the doctrine of the second Covenant) is call'd *diakonia* *πνεύματος*, 2 Cor. 3. 8. the administration, or means of dispensing the Spirit to us, and the Sacrament *συναντία* *ἀγίας*, the communication of the blood of Christ, yea and the censures, no carnall weak, blunt weapons of our warfare, 2 Cor. 10. 4. but mighty through God, &c. you have then a second energy of his resurrection toward our turning, so great, that he that holds out against this method of power and grace, and will not turne nor understand after all this, shall never be capable of any other means of blessing, of working that great worke for him: and so you see. the second ground of dependence, between the resurrection, and blessing, or turning. O that it might worke its designe upon us, that to day we would heare the voyce, that cries so loud to us out of Heaven, the last perhaps numerically, I am sure the last in specie or kind, the last artifice, this of the Word, and Sacraments, that is ever to be hoped for to this end, to blesse us, to turne us every one from our, &c.

3. The Resurrection hath to doe in blessing, and turning, in

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respect

respect of Christs *Intercession*, that prime act of his *Melchisedech-priesthood*, his powerfull intercession, i. e. in effect, conferring of grace on us; thus Rom. 8. 34. where that weighty businesse of justifying is laid more on the *Resurrection*, then *Death of Christ*, (*It is Christ that dyed, yea rather that is risen againe*) Tis thus enlarged in the next words, *who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us; his intercession, powerfull intercession at the right hand of God, (a consequent of Gods raising up his Son Jesus)* hath a maine influence on *turning first, and then justifying the ungodly*: and so Heb. 7. 25. *Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost, οὐτως εἰς τὸ μακάριον, to save them for good and all, deliver them from all kind of assailants, from sin, from themselves, from wrath, from hell, though not absolutely all, yet those that come unto God by him, those that turne when he will have them turne, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* Will you see this more clearly? Why then thus. There are three degrees of Grace, *preventing, exciting, assisting*: the first for *conversion*, the second for *sanctifying*, the third for *perseverance*. And two acts of *turning*, being already premised, for the beginning of that *blessing worke*, 1. By the power of that Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead; Then 2. By the descent of the holy Ghost; (the first as the seed sowne, the second as the raine and Sun-shine to bring it up) there is yet a third required for the earing and hardning of the corne, that of Gods *giving increase*, for the consummating this weighty affaire, for the confirming and establishing those that are initially *blest and turned*, into a kind of Angelicall state of *perseverance*: And to this it is that Christs continuall intercession belongs, for that is peculiarly for Disciples, for those that are Beleevers, Christians already, that they may be *preserved* and kept in that state, (as for Saint Peter in the time of shock, of tempest, when Satan is at his [*expetivit*]) that if we be permitted to be tempted, yet our faith may not faile, Luk. 22. 32. Another copy of this intercession you have Joh. 17. the whole Chapter is a prescript forme of it, a platforme of what he now daily performs in heaven. Look in the 11. verse, *Holy Father, keep through thine owne name, owne power, those whom thou hast given me, those that are beleevers already: and in the 15. I pray not that*

that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evill one; not from immunity from temptations, for an impeccable state, but for a sufficiencie of grace to keep, to sustaine them in time of temptation, *that they may be able to stand.* So that this Intercession of Christ, is apportion'd and adequate to the *πρόκοποις*, *proficients*, those that are Belcevers already, Disciples, (or others to come that shall be such, and when they are pray'd for, are considered under that notion, as tis cleare, ver. 20. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also that shall beleeve on me through their word*) a direct notion, who they are, that this daily intercession for keeping, for perseverance belongs to, the beleevers, faithfull disciples, and none others, *I pray for them, I pray not for the world,* ver. 9. Other prayers he can allow for the world, the veryest incarnate devils in it, the very crucifyers, *Father forgive them;* but this prayer for perseverance, for keeping, is onely for the [them] the beleevers there: The impenitent unbeliever cannot have his portion in that, unlesse he would have Christ pray to damne him irreveribly, to keep him in his impenitence, to seale him up unto the day of perdition: You see from hence by way of result or corollary, what tis that our perseverance in the faith and favour of God is imputable to, not any fatall contrivance for some speciall confidents, that their sinnes shall not be able to separate them, not any such *ἐπαύσεως*, as Marcus his Scholars in Irenaeus pretended to, that by it they were *φύσει πνευματικοί*, naturally spirituall, that all the bebaucheries in the world could no more vitiate them, then the Sun-beams are profan'd by the dunghill which they shine on, or the gold by the sluttery it may be mixt with, that by the shield of the mother of heaven, what ever they did, they were *ἀόρατοι τῷ κριτῇ*, invisible to the Judge. No such comforts and hopes as these, of perseverance in sinne, and favour with God at once, of making good our union with God, when we are in the gall of bitternesse, of being justified, when we are not sanctified; that magicall spell, that fastens us in a circle, (and then what ever we doe there, the devill cannot approach us) is the very hope of the hypocrite in Job, and that hope as hypocriticall as himself, perisheth, and vanisheth, when he hath most rest to set upon it, *Νέστις ἐλπίδι* *ἁλῆς*, saith Aristotle, the debauch't young man can

entertaine himself with such daring courageous hopes as these, *γῆρας δὲ θανάτου*, but old age and death-beds are not of so good assurance. There is but one principle, I say, of our perseverance to be depended on, that of Christs daily intercession for the true humble disciple, that his faith may not faile, and that Intercession, an act of power in Christ, to give what he thus prays for, *All power is given unto me*, and so in effect, a doing, and giving what ever is required on Gods part to the working of this blessed worke upon our soules, a concurrence, an actuall donation of minutely assistance to them that humbly wait and beg for it, and that secondly receive it, and make use of it when tis given. That double condition is indispensably required on our parts, to the obtaining of this grace, as you may see it in the *Habenti dabitur*, the parable of the talent: and Heb. 7. 25. *He is able to save them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them:* the ability to save and deliver out of the tempters hand, to give perseverance, is explained by his continuall intercession, but that onely to those that come unto God by him, the pious disciple, and true Christian, the worshipper of God that doth his will, that 1. begs, and then doth not resist, and grieve that Spirit of his, (as Heb. 5. 9. he is *author of salvation*, to whom? to all those that obey him) he is [able to save them] as if Christ were not able to save any others, to give any other perseverance, (as he could not doe miracles in his owne country, because of their unbelief.) The truth is, his decree and oath hath manacled him, not to work such miracles of mercies, prodigies of perseverance for the profane impenitent, the either spirituall or carnall presumer. You see now the dependence betwixt the *ἀνάσκειν*, on one side, and the *ἐκλογὴν & σωτηρίαν*, on t'other, the rising on one side, and the blessing and turning on t'other: I proceed to my last particular, that the turning is but a periphrasis of blessing, *To blesse us in turning, &c.*

And I would it were in my power in stead of demonstrating to your braine, to preach this home to your affections, to persuade you, and convince you of this great truth, the believe of which your felicity here, and eternity hereafter so much depends on; could you but acknowledge the *ἐν*, that there is any such thing as blessedness in a regenerate life, discern the
mystery

mystery of godlinesse, the present joyous estate, that lies folded up in the *new creature*, 'tis impossible you should be any longer in love with perishing. There may be perhaps some *smooth, pleasant* parts in sinne that the beast about you may *delight* in, some entertainment for that carnall *brutes*, but what a poore acquisition is that *delight*, to tempt thee out of *blessednesse*, to rob thee of such inestimable treasures? A piteous exchange this, make the best of it: but when that *momentary joy* is not to be had neither, when there is so little, so nothing even of transitory carnall pleasure in it, then Returne O *Shunamite*, returne, let not the *Prodigall* outwit thee, outthrive thee, rise up in judgment against thee, and condemne thee; He after the exhausting not onely of his *patrimony*, but of his *flesh*, a crest-fall'n degenerate Prodigall, a kind of *Lycambropos Nebuchadnezzar*, (but in worse company) driven from *men* to *swine*, which of all other creatures are unfittest to preach *returning* (their *ocular nerves*, saith *Plutarch*, are so placed, that they can never come to see Heaven, till they are laid upon their backs) yet even this (guest of *swine*) Prodigall can at last think fit to returne to his *Father*; O let this Prodigall turne *Preacher*, (as such sometimes when they have run out of all, are wont to doe) I shall give him the Text on which I shall be confident he will be very *rhetoricall*: *Returne unto thy rest O my soule.*

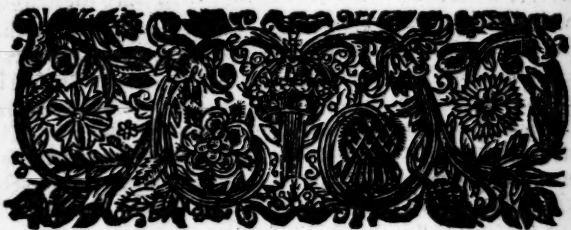
Again, consider the *what blessednesse is*, and that may profitably work upon you: Other excellencies there are, that may set you out in the eyes of men, generosity, obligingnesse, wisdom, learning, courage, &c. and every of these can be thought fit to be some sober maus Idol. And yet the utmost that can belong to these, is to be *praise-worthy*: And then what proportion is there betwixt all these, and one such heroick excellency, of which the Philosopher can say, *praise* is too poore a reward for them, we count them *blessed*.

O then if there be any consolation in Christ, any vertue, any praise, if any so noble a quality as ambition be left in you, if any spark of that Vestal flame, any aspiring to that which will ennoble and sublime your natures, any designe on *blessednesse*, behold and remember the *turning* in this Text, nay if you are but so well-natured as to wish a poore piteous accursed *kingdome* out of

of the jaws of so many hels, and capable of some returne toward *blesſedneſſe* againe, fulfill you my joy. Away with thoſe objections and prejudices we have to repentance, that 'tis a ragged, thornie, galling way, a dull, melancholy, joyleſſe ſtate, what ever you can miſſe, what ever quarrel in it, it will be abundantly repair'd and ſatiſhed in this one of *blesſedneſſe*; ſend me all the torments and miſeries, of this malicious Age, the inventions of wit, and cruelty, all the diſeaſes, that the Heathens feare had deified, and in the miſt of theſe a' preſent, inſtant *blesſedneſſe*, and I ſhall certainly deſie them all; give me *blesſedneſſe* upon the wrack, upon the wheel, and if you will ſuppoſe it poſſible, in hell it ſelfe, and I will never aſke Father *Abrahams* favour, or allay to thoſe flames, I ſhall not doubt but to enjoy that any thing, that hath *blesſedneſſe* in it. The very *Heathens*, ſaith *Saint Auſtine*, had a great deſigne upon one treaſure that they found they had loſt, uſed all meanes they could think would contribute toward the recovery of it; and in that queſt went at laſt, ſaith he, and gave their ſoules to the Devil, to get purity for thoſe ſoules. 'T were then but reaſon that you would give your ſoules unto God, to purchaſe it, that you would ſet a turning, a purifying, when the ſame *compendium* renders you pure, and cleſt together, when the being happier then you were before, is all that you pay to be ſo for ever.

I have tired you with preaching that, that would have been more ſeaſonable to have prayed for you, that God having, as on this day, *raiſed up his Son Jeſus*, will vouchſafe to ſend him into every of our hearts, to *bleſſe* us, to *bleſſe* this accuſed, miſerable Kingdome, this ſhaking, palſie Church, this broken State, this unhappy Nation, this every poore ſinner ſoule, by turning all, and every one from *his iniquities*, by giving us all, that onely matter of our peace, and ſerenity here, and pledge of our eternal felicity hereafter: Which God of his infinite mercy grant us all, for his ſon *Jeſus* ſake whom he hath thus *raiſed*. To whom with the Father, and the *Holy Ghoſt* be aſcribed, as our only tribute, the honour, &c.

GODS



Gods Complaint against Revolters.

The X. SERMON, prepared at
Charisbrook-Castle, but not Preach'd.

ISAIAH I. 5.

Why should you be stricken any more? you will revolt more and more.

Tis a heavy complaint of Gods, and though express'd without much noise, yet in a deep melting hearty passion, not onely in the *verse* next before my Text, with *heaven and earth* call'd to be witnesses of the complaint, but with a little varying of the expression, every where else, throughout the *Prophets*, that *Israel* doth not know, Gods people doth not consider. Al the arts of discipline and pedagogie had been used to teach them *knowledge*, and *consideration*, i. e. to bring them to a sight, and sense of their estate, lectures, warnings, chidings, blows, shaking and rousing, and hazening them, if it were possible, to awake them out of that lethargick, senselesse condition. The whole people used like that proud King of Babylon, driven from men, set to live and

Cc

converse

converse with the beasts of the field, (such were the *Chaldeans*, whither they were carryed captive) if so be, as it fared with him, so it might possibly succeed with them, the Field be a more gainful School then the Palace had been, that by that means at least, they might lift up their eyes to heaven, and their understanding return to them, *Dan. 4.* Turn'd from men into Beasts, that that stranger *Metamorphosis* might bee wrought on them, a transformation from men into men, from ignorant brutish, into prudent considering men, nay delivered up even unto Satan by way of discipline, that Satan might teach them sense; The plagues of *Egypt*, of *Sodom*, of Hell let loose upon them, to try whether like the rubbing and the smarting of the *Fishes gill*, it might restore these blind *Tobits* to their eyes and souls again. To work the same work, if it be possible, upon us, is, I professe, my buisnesse, and onely errand at this time; There hath been a great deal of pains taken by God to this purpose, doctrine and discipline, instructions and corrections, and all utterly cast away upon us hitherto, the whole head sick, and the whole heart faint, in the words next after my text, which you must not understand, as ordinarily men do, of the sins of that people, that those were the wounds, and bruises, and putrefied sores, (give me leave to tell you, that is a mistake for want of considering the context) but of judgments, heavy judgments, diseases, piteous diseases, both on head and heart, Epilepsies, wracking pains in the head, the whole Kingdom may complain in the language of the *Shunamites* Child, *O my head, my head!* nay, in the Prophets, the crown is faine from our head, the crown of our head torn & faine from our head, and the heart in terrible fainting sits, every foot ready to overcome; From the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, from one extreame part of the Nation to another, nothing but distresse or oppression, suffering or acting direfull Tragedies, misery or impiety, (the latter the more fatall symptome, the greater distresse of the two) and yet no man layeth it to heart, *England will not know, will not consider.*

The truth is, the deformities which are in our selves, we are such partiall self-parasites, that there is no seeing in a direct line, no coming to that prospect but by reflection; shall wee therefore bring the *Elephant* to the water, and there shew him and

and amaze him with the sight and ugliness of his *prophesies*: the state of the Jews is that water where wee may see the image of this present Kingdome most perfectly delineated in every limb and feature, its *prosperity*, its *pride*, its *warnings*, its *provocations*, its *captivities*, its *contumelious* using of the *Prophets*, scorning the *Messengers* from God that came to reprove them, at length its *fatal presages*, the deadly feuds, *Murders & crimes*, *Zelots* and *Brothers of the sword*, plowing it up to bee sow'd with salt and brimstone, and all this chargeable culture and discipline cast away upon them utterly, mortifying (in stead of sins and impieties) nothing but the reliques of *piety* and *civility*, and *ingenuous* nature; a strange pestilentiall fever, seising upon their very spirits, and souls; and now nothing but a *Roman Eagle*, or a *Hell*, a *Titus*, or a fiend left behind to work any reformation on them. Thus all Gods thunderbolts being exhausted, his methods of discipline pozed, and non-plas't and frustrated, there is nothing behind but calling in & retracting those rods, the no longer vouchsafing those *thunderbolts*, a news that perhaps you would be glad to hear of, respit of punishments, but that the most ominous direfull of all others, the most formidable of all Gods denouncings, the last and worst kind of *desertion*. *Why should you be* (not embraced and dandled, but) *scourged and smitten any more? You will revolt more and more.*

These words will afford you these four fields of plain and useful meditation;

1. *Gods custome of striking sinners, and encreasing stripes on them, in order to their reformation.*
2. *The prime proper seasons for such striking: 1. In case of revolt. 2. In case of revolting more.*
3. *The one onely case in which striking becometh uncharitable, when the more and the more God smites, the more and the more the sinner revolts.*
4. *And lastly, the pitifull estate of the sinner when he comes to this, when in this case God removes smiting, for though it be an act of mercy in God, yet 'tis that which bodes very ill, 'tis an indication of the most desperate estate of the Patient. Why should you bee stricken any more?*

I begin first with the first, (which lies not so visible and distinguishable in the Text; but is the foundation, that is supposed under it, and on which all that is visible is superstructed) and that is Gods pious and charitable design in smiting sinners, and increasing stripes on them; though now on more prudentiall considerations, they shall not be any more smitten.

If my children for sake my law, &c. I will visit their offences with the rod, and their sins with scourges, saith God by the Psalmist. God hath his visits for distempered children, not onely like that of St. Pauls, in the spirit of meeknesse, But also *ἐν πλῆθει*, with the rod: and if that single engine of discipline will not doe it, there are sharper and more behind, the flagella, or scourges, in the plurall. And this by the way of prudent medicinall processe, of solemn deliberate dispensation, according to rules of Art: You will presently discern it, if you but look into the nature, and cause, and processe of the disease: I shall give you but one way of judging of these, by remembring you, that all sin is founded in *bono jucundo*, in the pleasing, or delighting of the carnall faculty: Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed, when his carnall pleasurable faculty *ἐξελκεται*, *ἐκλινεται*, draws him out of his roade of piety, by an amiable pleasurable lure or bait: Of this kind, if you will look into the retail, you shall find every sin in the world to be, some law of the members, some dictate of the flesh, which is all for sensitive pleasure, a warring, a contending, arguing and pleading before the will against the adversary law of the mind, against the dictates of the honest, or virtuous, of the rational or Christian, which is a pretending & contending on the other side. Three representations there were of the apple in the first sin, and every of those under this notion of pleasure: The woman saw, 1. That 'twas good for food, pleasurable to the taste: 2. A desire (as 'tis in the Heb.) which we render again pleasant to the eyes: And 3. that 'twas to be desired to make one wise; i. e. according to the same Heb. notion, i pleasurable in this, that it would make them know more then they did before, a kind of satisfaction, and so pleasure to the understanding, (as you know knowledge, though it be but of trifles and news, is a most pleasurable thing. And so generally, every sin is begotten after the image and likeness of that first; the pleasures of lust, the pleasure,

juries of revenge, that huge high Epicurism the pleasures of pride, (the greatest that *Aristotle*, or the author *μετ' αριστοτελῆ*, conceived that the old Heathen gods could pretend to in their recesses, their not vouchsafing to see or hear any thing, but by Perspectives and Otacousticks) or again, the pleasures of *heresie*, of *schisme*, which he that is guilty of, saith the Apostle, is he not carnal? the pleasures of *singularity*, and being head of a faction, they say, the hugest *sensuality*, and voluptuousnesse. the most bewitching ravishment of any: And even *covetousnesse*, and *ambition*, the sinnes which seem to be particularly fastned on two other notions of the forbidden fruit, the *profit*, and *honour*, the wealth and greatness, the baits of the *world*, and not of the *flesh*, (and may have *smithings* of God proportioned to them, on our *estates*, and *honors*, as well as on our *flesh*) yet, I say, even these would certainly never be able to work upon us, if there were not a notion of *pleasure* in them: and therefore one of them is call'd the *lust of the eye*, and the worldly pomp, and greatness, the object of the other, (as that in *Moses*, of the *honour* of being called the son of *Pharaohs daughter*) is distinctly styled the pleasures of *sin*, in the plural, *Heb. 11. 25*. And indeed the matter is clear and demonstrable, there being but two contrary faculties about us, the *rationall*, and the *carnall* princip'e, the inward and the outward man, as every vertuous and Christian thought and action is a *συνήνεστος τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ*, *Rom. 7. 22*. a complacency and delight of the upper nobler spirituall faculty in the law of God, the object apporportioned to that, so is every sin that is ever committed, a *συνήνεστος τῷ νόμῳ ἐν μέλεσσι*, a complacency, or conjunction in liking, a being pleased with the law of the members, a choosing of that which may be most agreeable and proportionable to the designs of the *flesh*, i. e. most desirable and pleasurable to that.

Having given you the character of the disease, the distinct nature of *sin*, the propriety of the distemper, that some either true or false sensuall pleasure, something that is really delectable to the flesh, or that either by a false glasse of passion or custom, or else by an imperfect half light appears to be pleasurable, is the foundation and master of every sin, (never any revolts from God, but when we hope to enjoy our selves better in some other company, some revenue or income of *ἀπολαυσίς*, or joy to the flesh

expected, and aim'd at in every extravagance or out-lying) you cannot now choose but acknowledge the propriety of the Physick, which we have here before us, the usefullnesse of the *strokes*, or *smittings* for this recovery. When a man is in the pursuit of a meer pleasurable object, which he confesses to value for nothing else, but that it is *sweet to taste*, could he but discern or espy the whole *sweetnesse* and *pleasurablenesse* of it secretly let out; or spilt upon the ground, or evaporate before his eyes, or but a scourge held over his head, or a viall of gall or wormwood imbibed, that for every dram of *pleasure* shall give him a terrible proportion of *bitternesse* at the present, of instant pain or smart: 'tis not imaginable that any man in his senses should advance one step farther in this pursuit; the more *sensuall* and *carnall* man he is, the more he must abhor such marches as these, which are so treacherous and malicious to the very *flesh*; he that can satisfie himself with the empty name of *sin*, though it tast never so *sovre* or loathsome, that will not in this case *compromise* and compound with innocence, take purity on Christs terms, rather then venture on present racks and torments, had need be a sublime, aereall, *spirituall* sinner indeed, like *Lucifer* himselfe, who we know, is all Spirit, he must have nothing left of Sense or *Flesh* about him; Were but the thousandth part of that hell which expects the indulgent sinner in another world, mixt in the very cup of his *pleasurablest sin* here, the least *present whip*, in stead of all those *future Scorpions*, it would be almost impossible for the most magnanimous sinner to enter so deep for that empty *honour*, the bare *opinion*, or *fancy*, or *credit* of having assaulted and rebelled against heaven, and gain'd nothing by it, to pay so dear for that *which is not bread*, hath nothing of substance or satisfaction in it; and therefore this is the design of *Gods rod*, his *smittings*, his punishments to give us a little of that hell before hand, (which our *insidell* senses apprehend nothing of, as long as 'tis *future*) to help us to some dislike to *sin* at the present, to give us some part of its portion, (of the *odiousnesse* and *bitternesse* of it) in the very *mouth*, that wee may not have any joy in chewing or swallowing downe so abhorred a mixture, which hath such a certain arrear of horror, and bitterness in the *stomack*, to rain down some fire and brimstone into

into our Throats, whensoever we are gaping after that forbidden Tree; thus to discourage, if not to allay our hydropick thirst, to incumber and trash us in our violent furious marches, to pluck off the wheels of our *Egyptian chariots*, that they may drive more heavily, that finding the most pleasurable sin such a sad composition of more bitter then sweet at the very instant, we should never be such blind obedient Votaries of Satan, never so perfectly renounce and deny our selves, our own ease, our all kind of interests and advantages, never be such profest enemies and tyrants against our own flesh, as to goe on in such chargeable wayes of sin, when we see and feel so sadly, how without and before the certain cures of a chill'd old age, by this charitable anticipation of Gods smiting hand, *the dayes are come upon sin, that we can truly say that we have no pleasure in it.* And so you see the grounds of this medicinal method, the charity and piety of Gods design in smiting, my first observable; I proceed briefly to the prime proper seasons of this charity, this smiting, 1. In case of revolt, 2. Of revolting more, my second particular.

Gods first reason of punishing, is instantly upon revolt, at the first breaking off, or *aversion*, or departure from God; And sure he that is not suffer'd by God to enjoy one ease or comfortable hour in sin, that is presently call'd to discipline, taught what a jealous God he hath provoked, that is roused and awaked at the first nod, watcht over by the most vigilant Monitor, (that he cannot move out of his posture of piety, but presently God in heaven is a calling out to him, to reduce him to his rank again) cannot chuse but acknowledge himselfe a prime part of Gods care and sollicitude. The first day of going out into the field, as in Gods, so in Satans service, is generally a nice, and a criticall day; according to the successes or discouragements wee meet with then, we have more or lesse mind to the trade for ever after; should but our beginnings of revolt from God, our first treacherous intentions against him prove lucky, and smooth, and prosperous, 'twere ease and prone (and not at all improbable) for us to glyde insensibly into all rebellions and impieties, to swear fealty to Satan, that hath entertained us so hospitably, and suddenly to engage so deep under his colours, that there would be no retreating with honour, no returning to God.

God without being infamous, without undergoing the brand of *Apostates* from Satan, of a kind of *sadifragi*, *Covenant-breakers* and *Desertors*; Our repentance would goe for the more scandalous thing, our reduction to our Allegiance to Heaven, would be forfeiting of a *trust*, and within appear the more illfavoured reproachfull *revolt* of the two; Whereas if we meet with some checks and discouragements betimes, some rousing brushes at the first entrance into the service, 'tis possible we may discern our errour, especially if it were the *Flesh* that helped to seduce us, if the hope of Advantage that brought us into it, *Because the wicked goes unpunished, therefore the heart of man is wholly set to do evill*, saith *Solomon*, and therefore that God may not be thought to desert them presently at the first revolt, to deliver up that heart of theirs to that *hel* upon earth upon this first single provocation, God is concern'd in faithfulnessse to cause them to be troubled, not to lead them into this temptation to profane continuance in sin, but to give them this Grace, this Gift of punishment, to reduce and recall them presently as soon as they are revolted, to let Satan or his Instruments loose, to Disease and Awake this Drowzie Servant of his, who therefore to such purposes, though he bee cast out of heaven, from being Gods meniall Servant, is still *sanctus Dei*, Gods Officer, and Minister, retains so much of his old angelicall title, of being a Ministering spirit; and that if we be not wanting to our selves, to the greatest advantage of our soules, *is* *δικασμῶν*, not *is* *φθορῶν*, a piece of Edifying, not Sanguinary discipline. And let me tell you my opinion, that for that which is called *Punitive justice*, severity or revenge on sin, that part of the Magistrates office among men to be *δικῶν* *is* *ἀποδῶν*, an Avenger for wrath, were it not in meer necessary charity to them that are punish'd, or to them that are warn'd by others punishment, there were no reason for any man to inflict it upon another, 'twere wholly to be left to Gods tribunal.

From this hint two things I desire to commend to my Auditory, by way of Application.

1. The care that they are to have, to take speciall notice of every the softest degree of *smiting* that ever befalls them in their lives; be it a sicknessse, or a miscarriage, a thousand to one it is an application of Gods to some speciall distemper of thine, to some degree

degree of *revolt* from him: This I will not say is perpetually true, because I know there be other uses of *smittings*, for the exercise of many Christian vertues, which would rust & fully and come to little, and so Christ lose all the glory and renowne, and we all the reward of them, if we had not such occasions to exercise them) but I say the odds is so great, when the rod of God comes, that it comes for some such *revolt* of thine, that certainly it is thy duty, so far to distrust thine owne excellencies, as to doubt that it comes not to thee meerly as to an *athleta*, or combatant, or perfect Christian, *reus dimicant*, by way of tryall onely, but as to one guilty of some kind of revolt, and so is *adversarius*, for punishment and reformation: And though I cannot be confident it is so, yet believe me, thou hast so much reason to suspect thy self, thaa it will be worth thy paines to examine, upon every stroke on thy body, thy estate, may on thy reputation, every cursing of a *Shimei*, every approach, or terrour, brandishing the rod, or sword against thee, that 'tis some present sinne of thine, some degree of instant *revolt* that hath brought this stroke upon thee. *Βιησινδωρι*, saith Saint James, *If any man be sick*. &c. The whole Text supposeth it strongly probable, that he that is thus visited hath committed some act of revolt either of greater or lesser moment, either against God, or his brother, to which that sickness, hath some relation: and there is a notable place, Ecclesiasticus 18. 21. *Humble thy self before thou be sick, and in the time of sickness shew repentance*, supposing the time of sins to be the forerunner of sickness, and he that would but thus examine himself, whensoever he hath any such bitter portion sent him from God, aske his owne conscience (his best adviser) the question, to what former disease it is, to which God is *ialis*, & not as an Enemy, but a *Physitian* hath accommodated this application, he might perhaps forty years hence thank me for this admonition, and be able to tell me that from this day to that, he hath experimented the truth of the observation, never received a corrosive-plaister from God, but upon enquiry he found a piece of dead-flesh in himself, to which it clearly belonged; I doubt not but a few good memories might presently bring me in a catalogue of proofs to my observation, I desire you will be your owne Confessours, and doe it to your selves; and

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then doe the duty that in such case belongs to you. And that is, (in the second place) not onely to *acknowledge* the disease before God most freely, and apply his *physick* and our *diligence* to the cure of it, but withall to look upon these strokes, as the soveraigne *mercies*, so many beams of meere grace, Sermons from heaven, the very [bath Col] *the voice from heaven* of old, that seldom came but with a *clap of thunder* along with it, methods of Gods *restraining*, and *exciting* Spirit, and thanke God as heartily for them, as for the richest boones, the warmest sunshines, that you ever received from the *sun of righteousness*, and being once *made whole*, rescu'd (upon thy return) from one such first *smiting*, it concernes thee heartily for ever after, to *go sin no more*, lest a far worse thing happen unto thee.

For so it told you, there is a second season of *smiting* and that of doubling the blows, *viz.* upon our *revolving* more. God doth not presently upon the first recidivation, or relapse, give up the sinner for desperate: he concludes indeed most justly and deliberately, that the *venomous*, or *dissaffection* is the stronger, when it breaks forth again, the *leprosie* more dangerous, that it *spreads in the flesh*, after it hath been *lookt on by the Priest*, that the former *physick*, if 'twere sufficient to set him on his legs againe, was not yet able to make him a *haile sound man*, some venomous humour was left behind, and in all probability a stronger *physick* is now necessary, perhaps a whole *course of steels*: A *physick*, God knows, that this Kingdom hath been under five or six years, I would I could say, the Patient had prospered under it, nay that it had not growne far worse, gone backward in all *auspicious symptoms* ever since, as if that *steels*, not sufficiently *prepared*, were turn'd into the habit of the body, & now wanted some higher *chymical* preparations to work it out again. If this be the case, as God knowes its too suspicious it is, I am then *false* on my third generall, the onely case wherein this *sharp physick* becomes *unseasonable*, when the more and the more God strikes, the more and more the sinner *revols*, and to that I must now hasten. *Why, &c.*

A nice subtle question and dispute there hath been among Divines, which may in part have its decision from hence, concerning a peculiar middle third kind of knowledge in God; as whether, on supposition that such a thing should come to passe, which

which never shall, God know what will follow by way of consequence. To this purpose many notable passages of Scripture there are: the Oracle, that *David* received about the men of *Keilah*, the assurance that they would deliver him up, if he entrusted himself to them, though the truth is, he never made the tryall of their sincerity; but beleev'd God the searcher of their hearts, without that more costly experiment. So when *Christ* affirms of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, that, if the miracles done in *Bethsaida*, had been done among them, they had infallibly repented. And so *Saint Paul* in his voyage by sea, that told the *Mariners* how certainly they should be cast away, if any wēt out of the ship, though they neither went out, nor lost one life. And so here; where God by the Prophet foretels, that in case he now should smite them any more, they would revolt more and more, and therefore resolves to give over smiting. To enter into any part of that subtile debate is not my designe, as remembring that of *Greg. Naz.*: that the *Amorites* and the *Moabites* were not permitted to enter into the Church of God: i.e. faith he, *Μακρολογῶν, ὡς ἀνομιὰς ποιεῖν ἁγίας, κατ' ἰσχυρίαν καὶ σὺβριλιν διαλογισμῶν, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἰσχυρὸν ἡμῶν, ὡς ἀποδοῦναι τὴν χάριν, ἢ τὴν ἐκτίκασην τοῖς ἀκούουσιν: τὸ ἄριστον δὲ τὸ ἐκείνῳ, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἰσχυρὸν ἡμῶν, ὡς ἀποδοῦναι τὴν χάριν, ἢ τὴν ἐκτίκασην τοῖς ἀκούουσιν.* the utmost that will be of use or profit to us, is, to observe this positive aphorisme of Gods methods of discipline, of his gracious economies; seldome or never to send punishments on any, but when they are probable to doe some good, to work reformatiōs on them. Two cases there are in Physick, when the Physitian in all reason withdrawes his hand and his drugs, 1. When the Patient is desperate, and the physick of an high nature; for then such costly drugs should neither be paid out, nor defamed, neither lose their vertue, nor adventure their reputation on the desperate patient; as long as there is hope, they must be plyed, (be it never so chargeable or painfull) even to cupping and sacrificying, even skin after skin, (as those words in *Job* would be render'd, those things that are nearest to us one after another) and all that he hath will he give for his life: and when there is no hope, some easie Physick, some indifferent, tame cordials may be allow'd till the last gasp: but the nobler drugs must not be thus roripously dealt with; & so in like manner to the desperate revolter, the sun may shine, and the rain may fall on him, as well as on the most hopefull; some indifferent ordinary ways of cure,

such are prosperity, affluence of Fortune, and the like: but for the *magistralls* of nature and art, such are Gods *smittings* and *punishments*, which cost God deare, as it were, he is faine to fetch them from far, to *goe out of his place* for them, in the Prophets style, God will not be so prodigall of these, but when there is hope that they may prove successfull.

And so againe, 2 ly, when the condition is more hopefull, yet in case the kind of *physick*, is become too *familiar* with the body, when it ceases to be *physick* and proves *diet*, turns into nourishment & encrease of the disease, 'tis then more then time to change the *hills*; to set the Patient to some new course, and this is the case in the Text again; & I heartily wish to God, it were not the very case of the Kingdom: I will not say 'tis a desperate patient, that no method of Gods could possibly work good on us, (no, I will hope and pray yet against our wickednesse; and do it on this very score; For although some part of the Nation have had, for a long time, little of this bitter *physick* administred to them by God; yet sure some of us are still under this *cure* of the rod, have not all our *causick* plaisters torne off from us, from whence I think I may conclude, that God is still a *wrestling* with our disease, hath not yet given us quite over unto death) but this I am afraid, I may too truly say, that of those that are still under this sharp & soveraigne course of *physick*, this of *punishments*, it is become too *familiar* with most of us, we look not on our afflictions as on *medicines* sent us immediately out of the special dispensatory of Heaven, but as the ordinary *diet* and portion of mortall mutable Men: I wish I could not adde, that our *malady* hath most highly thrived, and prosper'd under our *Physick*, more new kindes, and varieties of sinning, from all the Nations about us, nay from hell it selfe taken in, incorporate and naturaliz'd among us, in a few yeares of Gods Sword being drawn, his thunderbolts scattered among us, a greater progresse towards *Atheism* made generally in this Natiō under this *preaching* of the rod, then in many Ages before had been observable among us; Let it be considered with some sadnesse, and it wil certainly appear to the eternall shame of a provoking people, that so every degree of oppression and injustice, that this Nation was formerly guilty of, the thousand-fold were now a very moderate

moderate proportion; to every *oath*, that was formerly darted against Heaven, there are now whole vollies of *perjuries*, never did so course and sturdy, so plaine, and boysterous a sin, so perfect a *Camel* goe down so *glib*, and go over so *easily*. To omit that prodigy of lying and standing (a vapour that came visibly out of Hel, as soone as it was there resolved that innocence must suffer) some sins as waisting as any in the whole inventory have of late grown so frequent, & fashionable in the world, that they have quite put off the nature of sin, by being our daily food, digested and converted into other shapes, as if swallowed by a pious man (who, God knows, must answer the dearest for his revolts) they should turne into his substance, become acts of *piety*, of the highest size, one such metamorphos'd, transfigured sinne is become able to *commute*, and expiate for a hundred more, that have not had the luck of that disguise; and in a word, our revolts are so prodigiously increased, improved into such a mountainous vastnesse, such a colony of none but gyantly shapes, that though I cannot undertake to foretell our fate, or asseme that we are those very men come to that *vereyris*, upon which God by the purport of the doome in my Text, will soone give over *smiting any more*, (which perhaps some might be so mad as to think an happy news, if they could but hear of it, and would be content to venture any hazard that this could bring on them) yet this I shal from hence be able to pronounce dogmatically, that should such a fate befall us, (either the Nation in generall; or any of us in particular) should there be a respite of the rod, before any laying downe of the sins that called for it, a *cessation of armes* betwixt heaven and earth, before a cessation of hostilities between earth and heaven, this were as the last, so the worst of evils, a calme to be dreaded beyond all the loudest tempests, which wilbe the better evidenc'd & demonstrated to you, if we proceed to the fourth & last particular, *the pitiful estate of the sinner, when in this case God removes smiting. Why, &c.*

To discern the *sadnesse*, and deplorablenesse of this estate, I shall need give you no sharper character of it, then onely this, that 'tis a condition that forceth God to *forsake* us in meer mercy, to give over all thoughts of *kindnesse* to us, and that the onely degree of *kindnesse* left, whereof we are capable:

In plaine termes, to that man or people, that is the worſe for ſtripes, theſe two moſt unreconcilable contraries are moſt ſadly true:

The removing of theſe ſtripes is the greateſt judgement imaginable.

And yet 2^{ly}, *That greateſt judgement is the onely remaining mercy alſo.*

Conſider theſe two apart, you will ſee the truth of them.

1. *The removing the phyſick before it hath done the work, is the greateſt judgement,* even ſubſtraction of all grace, downright deſertion, and nothing more fatall then that to him that cannot recover, or repent himſelfe, without the aſſiſtance of that phyſick; ſtrokes are not ſent by God but as a laſt, and neceſſary reſerve, when a long peace and proſperity have been tryed, and not been able to make any impreſſion on ſin, nay perhaps have gone over to the enemies ſide, taken part with ſinne, prov'd its prime friend, furniſh'd it with weapons, and ammunition, enabled it to riot, and grow luxurious, and ſo think of being ſinall Conquerour over the Spirit of God, which had it been kept low, it could not have donè, and in this caſe the weight and fortune of the whole battel lies on ſtripes, and if thoſe be commanded away by God, if call'd upon a firſt or ſecond repulſe, if all Gods thunderbolts, the onely remaining hope, have the retreat ſounded to them, what a deſtitute, routed, forlorne eſtate is the Soule then left in? Had ſinne been wounded or worſted in the fight, brought to ſome viſible declination, yet this withdrawing of thoſe forces that gave this luſty aſſault, would preſently reſtore it to ſome heart and courage again, would give it ſpace to rally and recover ſtrength; and ſo oft it falls out, that when afflictions have done their work, mortified our exceſſes, and ſo march home again to God, in triumph over the enemy, yet within a while (after the ſmart is forgotten) the very vanquiſh'd luſt returns, and gets ſtrength again, and, as 'tis oft in *Thucydides* ſtory, by that time the trophies are ſet up, the baffled enemy regains the field and victory: But when on the other ſide, ſin after the combate with Gods rod, comes off unwounded, and haile, and the bruised and batter'd rod is ſeen to have retired alſo, then this is the greateſt fleſhing of ſinne imaginable, a perfect bloodleſſe victory over grace, over Gods mercifull Spirit, ſtriving with

with us; and nothing but *baughtinesse*, and *triumph*, and *obduracy* is to be lookt for after such successes; And this is that sad state of *desertion* I told you of, a leaving the poor soule, like him that had *fallen among thieves*, wounded and half dead; and not so much as one good Samaritan neer to bind up, or powre in the least drop of oyle into the wounds, (for 'tis not imaginable that ease, or peace, to calme, to soft, so pusillanimous a creature, as affluence or prosperity is, should ever come in to the rescue, should doe such valiant acts, when so much stouter, sterner instruments have been so utterly repulsd.) And yet in this sad case, the matter is not yet at the highest, but, (which was the second part of the true, but dolefull paradox) this very *desertion*, is the onely tolerable mercy now behind; Should God continue stripes, and they still make the sinner more *Atheisticall*, this, I say, would but increase the load in hell; Every *improsperous stroke* on the steel'd anvil-heart will but adde to the tale of *oppositions*, and *affronts*, and *resistances*, and so to the catalogue of *guilts* and *woes*, that sad arreare which another world will see paid distinctly; and so the calling off, or intercepting of these strokes, (*i. e.* these our unhappy advantages and opportunities of *enhancing* our score, or reckoning) is a kinde of *mercy* still, though but a pitifull one; and if God do not think fit to afford us this mercy, if God do not give over *smiting* in this case, this is then his greater severity yet.

And so I conceive the impenitents state brought to an extraordinary issue, that whatsoever God deal out to us, the consequent is of a nature most exquisitely miserable; if he take off his punishments, we are in a desperate estate, there's nothing left, in any degree probable to do any good on us; and if he do not take them off, they do but *accumulate*, and heighten our future *torments*; the mercy is a cruell mercy, and the severity a cruell severity; the first leaves us in a *palsie* or *lethargy*, a dead stupid mortified state, and the second encreases the *feaver*, adds fuel to the *flames*: If he strike not, we lie dead insin, as so many trunks and carcases before him: if he strike on, he awakes us into *oathes* and *blasphemies*, and so still more direfull *provocations*.

And so, as we are wont to say of an erroneous Conscience, in case the commands are lawfull, which that thinks unlawfully; it
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sins which way soever it moves, by disobedience, against the duty of the fifth Commandement; and by obedience, against the dictate of conscience, (a sad exigence no way in the world to be avoided; but by getting out of the prime fundamentall infelicity, getting the *erronious Conscience* informed and rectified:) so is it, in a manner, with God towards this unhappy creature of his, that hath not, nor is not like to edifie under stripes, he wounds it mortally, whatsoever he designeth toward it; his desertion is cruell, and his not deserting is cruell too. Lay but the scene of this Kingdome at this time, (of which I may say, 'tis a stubborne unnurtur'd scholar of Gods, a very ill proficient under stripes, far worse, and more hopelesse now, then when first it came under this discipline) and I shal challeng the prudentest diviner under Heaven, to tell me rationally, what 'twere but tolerably charitable to with, or pray for it, in respect of the remouall of Gods judgements: Should we be *repited*, before we be in any degree reformed, thrust out of Gods Schoole, now we are at the wildeſt, This were a wofull change, removing of *Canaanites*, and delivering us up to the *beasts of the field*, breaking down the inclosure, and letting us into the *wildernesse*, rescuing us out of *purgatory*, and casting us into *hell*, and never any *Orate pro anima*, prayer for deliverance out of those *poetick flames*, was so impious, so unkind as this. And whilst I have this prospect before me, me thinks I am obliged in very charity to pray, *Lord keep us in this Limbo still*, these but transitory afflictions of this life, which in comparison with spirituall desertion, or delivering up to our selves, is a very cheerful & comfortable condition: And yet should God thus hearken to that prayer, continue us under this discipline longer, provide a new stock of Artillery, and empty another Heaven, another Magazine, and Armory upon us, and all prove but *bruta fulmina* still another seaven yeares of judgments, thrive no better with us, then the last sad apprenticeship hath done: O what an enhancement would this be of our reckoning? What a sad score of aggravations, (that is, of so many mercies and graces, so many wrestlings of his Spirit with sin, all griev'd and repell'd by us) & consequently what a pile of guilts toward the accumulating of our flames? What is the naturall and the onely

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salvo to this intricacy, I suppose 'tis prone to any man to divine; why, to reform the *fundamentall error*, which can otherwise never be repair'd after, to begin, if it be but now, to edifie, and to be the better for *stripes*, to set every man to this one late, but necessary resolution, and not to be content to have done somewhat at home in private, every man in mending one, as they say, (though if that were done uniformly, 'twould serve the turn) but every man, *whose heart the Lord hath stricken* to be a convert-humble-mourner for the iniquity of his people, (for the provocations of this Church, and Kingdome, and for the *plague of his own heart*) to go out, and call all the idle by-standers in the field, to draw as many more as 'tis possible, into that engagement, and in this sense to bring into the service a whole army of *Covenanters* and *Reformers*, every man vowing hostility against those waisting *sins* of his, that have thus long kept a tortur'd broken Kingdome and Church upon the *wheel*, which can never get off, till we come whole sholes of suppliants, and auxiliaries to its rescue; nay till the sins that first brought it to this execution, become the *arm's-uxor*, be delivered up cheerfully to *suffer in the stead*. That this work be at length begun in some earnest, you will surely give God and his *Angels*, and your friends leave to expect with some impatience; and 'twere even pity they should any longer be frustrated: If they may at last be so favour'd by us, our state will be as great a *riddle of mercy* and of *blisse*, as 'twas even now of *sadnesse* and *horror*: Let God doe what he please to us for the *turning*, or for the *continuing* our *captivity*, 'twill be matter of infinite advantage, and joy to us; If he continue us still upon the *croffe*, after the *consummation est*, after the work is done, after it is a *reform'd*, purified Nation; O that is a super-angelicall state, a laying a foundation in that deep, for the higher and more glorious superstructure of joy and *blisse* in another world; Nay, if he should sweep us away in one *Akeldama*, this were to the true Penitent, but the richer boon, a *transplantation* only, a sending us out a *triumphant* (not captive) *colony* to heaven. Or we be then *taken down from the Croffe*, and put into the quiet chambers, or dormitories, if there be seasons of *rest* and *peace* yet behind upon this earth in these our days, O they will be rich *seasons* of opportunity to bring

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forth glorious proportionable fruits of such repentance, a whole harvest of affiance & faithful dependence upon Heaven, a daily continuall growth in grace, in all that is truly Christian; In a word, of rendring us a *kingdome of Angelicall Christians here, and of Saints hereafter*; Which whether it be by the way of the Wilderness, or of the Red sea, by all the sufferings that a *villanous world* can design, or a *gracious Father* permit and convert to our greatest good, *God of his infinite mercy grant us all, even for his sons Jesus Christ his sake, To whom with the Father, &c.*

THE END.